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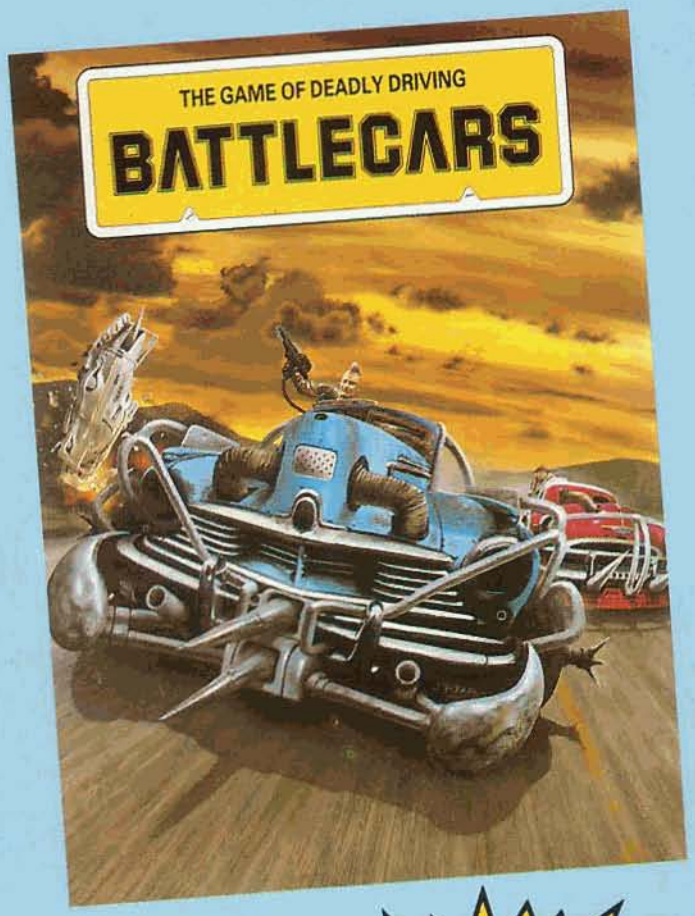

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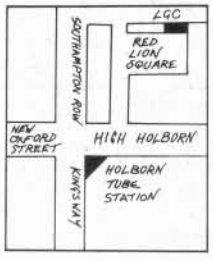

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Issue 46 **October 1983**

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ADVERTISING MANAGER: Clive Bailey
PUBLISHER: Games Workshop Ltd
Printed in England

All correspondence should be addressed to *White Dwarf*, 27/29 Sunbeam Rd, London NW10 6JP.

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Ian Livingstone

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'Canst thou pick that lock, good elf?' said the young priest to the leather-clad figure who was fiddling with the lock on the stout iron-clad door. 'Else stand back so Grimfist Fellhand may smite it down with his mighty axe.'

'Patience, holy one,' said the thief testily. 'Wizardess! Bring the lantern nearer so I might better see what I'm about'.

The cloaked figure stooped; 'Have a care', for 'tis the third move, and thy idle chatter will bring a wandering monster.'

Sure enough the DM rolled his dice and the players could tell immediately that some perambulating peril was about to disturb the elf's labours.

'It's 2 to 8 – er, 6 – goblins' said the DM hurriedly consulting the DM's guide. 'They are wearing...leather armour and carrying short swords, and...are 60ft away from you and their attitude to you seems to be...unfriendly.'

'Good' said the young cleric. 'Grimfist will make ready with his axe and I with my mace, and we will have at them. 'Tis not worth using Phantastica's sleep spell...'

'Nay nay' said the elf, who by now had successfully picked the lock 'they are but wanderers who will have no treasure. Offer them three score of gold and tell them to hence.'

'Ol' sneakyfingers is right' said the fighting man, idly thumbing the edge of his mighty battleaxe. 'Tis not worth fighting such puny little worms. And if they do not accept our offer, then by Angorth I will take them on alone, for they are 1-1 monsters and I have 4 attacks against such as they.'

'They take the money.' said the DM after rolling a dice. He had considered having the goblins change their minds on being called "puny little worms" but he decided it was not worth the trouble. They were only wandering monsters after all, and he had something much more interesting behind the door...

Strangers in the Night

Wandering Monsters in D&D by Phil Palmer

The *DM* is full of advice on setting up a campaign but is strangely reticent on the subject of wandering monsters. The basic purpose of the wandering monster seems to be to penalise the slow or overcautious party but their existence is not hard to justify on other grounds as well. It would be strange indeed if the adventurers were the only creatures wandering round the dungeon – some will be looking for a house, some will be looking for food or treasure and some will be looking for a fight. They will be attracted by light, noise and the sound of movement or fighting, and will generally be ready to fight if necessary – if they were not, they would not have survived this long.

From the gaming point of view wandering monsters can be very useful. Apart from penalising the slow or noisy party, the wandering monster can be used to give a hint to the party, wear down a party that is too strong, bolster up a weak party, or simply liven up a rather boring section of the dungeon. I know one DM who uses wandering monsters (WMs) mainly as a method of punishing players who are not paying attention to the game! Unfortunately, WMs are not as well thought out as the rest of the dungeon. The classic DM's error is to have a party of 4 orcs, say, coming upon a party down a corridor that leads only to a black dragon which they could not possibly have got past. While it is true to say that you can always produce an explanation if you try hard enough this is hardly fair to your adventurers. A common method used by DM's is a purpose-built WM table for each level or section of a dungeon, and only falling back on the table in the *DMG* in case of emergency. There are still problems of this method, however, as I hope the little episode at the beginning of this article showed. For example, there was the frenzied dice-rolling to find out what, when, how many and how strong the monsters were. Then there was the fact that (apart from the ogres and gelatinous cubes) WM's are known not to carry treasure. The fighting man knew exactly what level the goblins were (and thus how many attacks he would have against them) because he knew they would be straightforward standard monsters. Finally and most importantly, players and DM alike regarded the WMs as a nuisance to be disposed of as quickly as possible, rather than as an interesting problem to be tackled like any other in the dungeon. How then is a DM to go about beefing up his WM's?

Selecting a Monster

First, wandering skeletons. The *MM* says that skeletons are created by an evil cleric or magic-user and are set some task which can be described in a dozen or so words. They are typically used as guards for their creator or his treasure. As such, it is highly unlikely that one would be encountered as a WM except in some room or corridor that their creator wanted them to guard. I suppose an evil cleric might command a skeleton to 'Go round the dungeon killing everything you meet' but this is not very likely – after all he might meet them again himself! The choice of WM's in a particular part of the dungeon will reflect that part of the dungeon to a certain extent. Admittedly many of the monsters will be universal such as goblins or ochre jelly but there wouldn't be many gelatinous cubes meandering about if the dungeon is full of pit traps! If the DM wanted to give a hint that there was a powerful druid, say, in a particular area, then the party might find themselves meeting spiders, rats and insects almost every other turn. This still leaves the problem of all that dice-rolling. One solution is to plan out the entire table in advance but personally I prefer to let the players know what's going on – it reminds them to be careful! Rolling up half-a-dozen or so of each type of monster works well but there is a limit to the amount of time you can spend creating monsters that the party may never meet. Don't spend too long making monsters – there is no point in having a choice of 30 monsters in an area where the party is not going to spend more than about 8 moves.

When a dungeon is inhabited by one particular type of monster, say a tribe of orcs, one idea is to roll up a long list of monsters and simply run through them in order, whenever they turn up in a room or as WMs (certain personalised individuals may have set places, of course). This is very convenient if, for example, there are only 40 orcs in the whole dungeon as it enables you to keep track of the number you have 'used' and it's easier to equip them. If 5% of the orcs are armed with short swords then simply throw 1d20 to decide which of the first 20 it is. The same goes for the next weapon and so on until all are fitted up.

Friendly Monsters

When placing monsters in a dungeon always consider what they are doing there. In the case of WMs the usual reason is a search for something to eat, steal or kill; but if you roll up a good monster it's better to give them something more interesting to do. Why not have the occasional friendly WM. Perhaps with their own reasons for being in the dungeon such as a dwarf searching for his lost wife and children. He may need some help... The important thing is to vary your WMs.

A Different Approach – The Random Incident

This is an idea that has been used by some DM's and deserves a wider audience. Instead of introducing new monsters as WMs, you simply use the monster you already have. Set out below are a list of examples. These incidents do not relate to any particular dungeon and if you like you could design one round them:

1. The elves in room A decide to attack the magic-user in room C. They move quietly through room B, then split into two groups and attack from room B and the corridor outside room C. The signal to attack will be when the leader outside in the corridor sounds his magic horn.

The leader will have his *+1 Sabre* and the cleric has a scroll of *cure light wounds*, but the rest of their treasure will be hidden under a flagstone in room A. During the fight the horn will be broken and the cleric will use his scroll. If the

adventurers arrive during the fight each side will be down to ¾ of their usual hit dice and if an offer of assistance is given to either side it will be gratefully accepted.

2. The party meet a figure in a dark monk's robe, who is apparently unarmed. His face is deeply shadowed by his hood. He asks the adventurers in a deep melodious voice whether they know the whereabouts of the *Chalice of Utmost Evil*. In fact he is Godley Fairhand, a 4th level paladin who is on a quest to destroy the Chalice, and is wearing a captured robe to conceal his *+2 Plate* and *Holy Sword*. He will expect the party to help him in his quest. He is known for his hasty temper.

3. The party meet Mad Magre, the 6th level magic-user from room C. He is a servant of the lawful neutral god Goltazar and is going to attack the renegade priests of Goltazar in the temple at room K, who have turned from the True Faith. He will try and persuade you to join him and if that fails will use his *charm person* on whoever appears to be the leader. He has his scroll of *monster summoning 1* tucked up his sleeve and is wearing his *Ring of Water-Walking* but the key to the *Chalice of Utmost Evil* is still hidden in the secret compartment of his chest in room C.

If the adventurers arrive during the fight in room K they will find that Mad Magre has used all his 3rd level spells and his scroll and will only have the spells of a 4th level MU. The clerics will have used half their spells and both sides will be at ¾ strength. If the party move into the temple both sides will forget their differences and set upon the party, as they will be violating holy ground.

If they are undisturbed the clerics will kill the MU in 3 full moves. They will strip his body of all treasure and throw his decapitated body outside room K where it will remain until the end of the incident.

4. The female dragon in room D lays another egg. She will be weakened (-5 hit points and -2 strength and dexterity) but will be very sore and touchy.

5. One of the dragon's eggs hatches. The baby dragon will have minimum hit points, strength and dexterity and its mother will be *very, very* protective.

6. 4 spectres materialize in the Chamber of the *Chalice of Utmost Evil* and perform a strange ritual dance before it and the sound of their wailing echoes throughout the dungeon level. This happens quite regularly and the local residents are all used to it. They say you can spot an outsider by the way he reacts to the noise...

7. One of the passageways near the adventurers cave in (dice for which one). In case the party is trapped the DM should have prepared rules for the party to dig themselves out!

8. There is an earthquake. Every creature in the dungeon takes 1-2 points of damage.

9. A giant mole digs a tunnel from room E to one of the corridors F, G or H.

10. A gust of wind blows from the trapdoor at I all the way to the entrance, blowing all the doors in between open and shut (as the case may be), and any torch in any affected room will be blown out. If a scroll is held in the hand a saving throw against magic will have to be made or the scroll will be blown away.

11. A wandering bandit touches the bowl of flowers in corridor J and there is a scream as the *glyph* trap goes off. The *glyph* is self-recharging and will take 1 to 4 hours to do so during which time it will not operate. The bandit is killed and his body lies there until the next WM throw is made, when the evil clerics in room K will take the body in and try to turn him into a zombie.

12. The adventurers meet a zombie made by the clerics in room K. The zombie is out of control (the clerics are undergoing an alignment change thus Mad Magre's wrath) and will attack anything on sight. Because it is not properly under control it cannot be turned.

13. The female dragon at D goes to the well at Z for a drink of water. She is nervous about leaving her eggs and will rush back at once if she hears anything going on behind her.

14. An Ankheg digs a tunnel between two rooms.

15. A freak of magic gates a type one demon into the dungeon at I. It wanders round the dungeon corridors for 1-4 hours before entering the Chamber of the *Chalice of Utmost Evil* (attracted by the latent malice) and is transported back to Hell by touching the teleport stone.

16. The occupants of one room have a feast and get roaring drunk. Dex, Wisdom and Intelligence will be halved for 5-8 hours.

Apportion the wandering incidents to the main areas of the level and once an incident is rolled it continues (unless otherwise specified) until the next WM is thrown. The previous incident then finishes and the participants return to their rooms if the adventurers have not stumbled across them. If an incident is rolled again that wasn't dealt with by the party before there is no point why it should not occur again; the party are not to know that the same orcs tortured the same kobold behind the same door 1½ hours ago. Not all the WMs should be replaced by incidents, because this makes things a little difficult to run but also the entire dungeon level can get decimated if you throw a lot of sixes! Most dungeon populations will be constantly changing – a party of orcs, say, arrives in the dungeon as wandering monsters, kills one of the weaker inhabitants and takes over its lair. If they are successful they will move on down in search of more treasure, but if they are not so lucky they will move up or out (if they are still alive).

This explains why the monsters in a particular area or level tend to be of approximately the same power. If any dungeon dweller is killed or seriously injured it won't be long before something comes along and takes its room and its treasure, and if it happens to be the adventurers then it's their good fortune, but they will have to be quick or someone will beat them to it! All the dungeons which have odd items lying around for the party to pick up just aren't realistic, and if there is a monster with a magic weapon about, when he's attacked he won't be afraid to use it; after all it got him where he is in the dungeon.

Hopefully, this has started you thinking about WMs and will help to make them more of an integral part of the dungeon, rather than being the *DMG*'s list grafted on. Remember as far as the inhabitants of the dungeon are concerned the adventurers are just a bunch of wandering monsters!□

Open Box...

In Open Box, *science fiction and fantasy games and rulebooks currently in the shops are reviewed by independent authorities. Ratings are on a scale from 1 to 10, in several categories, or as a single overall mark for role-play accessories.*

RUNEQUEST COMPANION
Chaosium Inc **£6.95**

This is the first in a projected series, intended to appear at irregular intervals when there is enough material to warrant it, and designed to alleviate the withdrawal symptoms caused by the disappearance of *Wyrms Footnotes*. Articles from issues of that magazine that still have relevance, fragments of projects that never got completed, new material from *Chaosium* authors and outside contributions will all appear, and the *Companion* is intended to respond to *RQ* enthusiasts' interests. For this reason I would urge everyone who can to tick off a few of the categories listed on the back and send the result to *Chaosium* – the more views you can get into one letter, the better.

The first issue of the *Companion* contains some seventy pages, with a nice cover by Becker. What do we get? The material which I know to have been chosen for republication from *Wyrms Footnotes* consists of illustrations, scraps of imaginative fiction and poetry, and the like, including a segment from Sir Ethilrist's History of My Black Horse Troop describing how he killed the monster Hungry Jack. All is entertaining stuff, but not as interesting or useful to newer players as reprints of the articles on the elemental pantheons would have been, for instance, or the thought-provoking articles on aspects of the rules by various authors in the last four issues, which I'm sure many will not have seen over here, where I doubt if there's a back number of *WF* left unsold. Some of the material that appears to be new is also a bit lightweight though interesting: accounts of unicorns and 'skullbush', one of the useful plants to grow in Prax, a little more on trolls, how to cook the non-human parts of walktapus (it is not at all clear to me how one gets these parts to stop regenerating unless by *disrupting* all HPs, which I suppose will permanently 'kill' a walktapus part). More generally useful are the reprint of the corrections and additions to 2nd edition *RQ*, also issued with the boxed version, and the latest cult compatibility table, which includes all Glorathan cults published so far and takes note of some criticisms made (an index of the publication-place of all *RQ* cults, Gloranthan or not, is also provided). Many fascinating fragments have been excerpted by Greg Stafford from the Jonstown Compendium, a collection of scrapbooks of lore maintained by the Lhankor Mhy cult there; these shed more light on Kralorela, the mysterious empire in the east of Genertela, and related matters such as the Black Sun [of *Trollpak*], in particular, but also include such items as a list of the great gods, the elimination of any one of whom would seriously strain the whole fabric of the Gloranthan universe, and of the heroquests of Harmast Barefoot, one of the Orlanthi heroes briefly described in *WF13*, which sheds a little more light on what heroquests are. But Greg's contributions on illusion magic, the history and makeup of the Holy Country south of Sartar, and the related matter of the re-opening of the seas by Dormal the Sailor, illustrated with good maps, will probably strike most readers as the most important new contributions to our knowledge.

Finally, Alan LaVergne contributes a solitaire maze, for players of any level, and a *RQ* detective story, *The Smell of a Rat*, featuring Zero, the greatest living Gloranthan detective (remember him? *Soloquest* pg25). This is at once one of the funniest fantasy stories I have ever read and an extremely good illustration of how to make clever use of fairly ordinary spells. Among its appealing features are a reluctant werewolf, an Orlanthi who can't remember his poetry, a new medium for gambling (on Rubble Runner fights), and probably the most unlikely familiar you will ever come across. His people initiates and priests as they are, behave like people, in a pleasantly down-to-earth manner. Let's hope for more like this.

In general I feel this starts off the *Companion* well – a high proportion of useful or entertaining material and little that is totally peripheral. Production quality is good overall, with a few errors or misprints.

Overall: 8 **Oliver Dickinson**

CHIVALRY & SORCERY:
Fantasy Games Unlimited **£14.95**

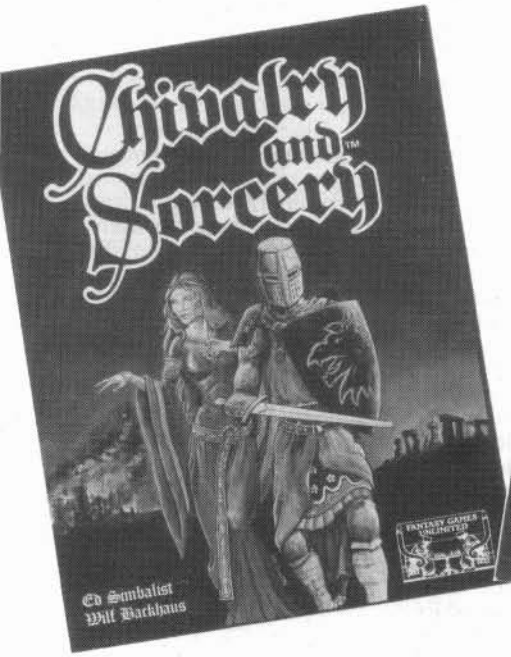
This is a re-issue of *FGU's* Middle Ages fantasy role-playing game. The new product is a great improvement on the old, and will probably attract more attention. The set consists of three A4 volumes, with a sample character sheet for photocopying. The type in all three volumes is small but easily read.

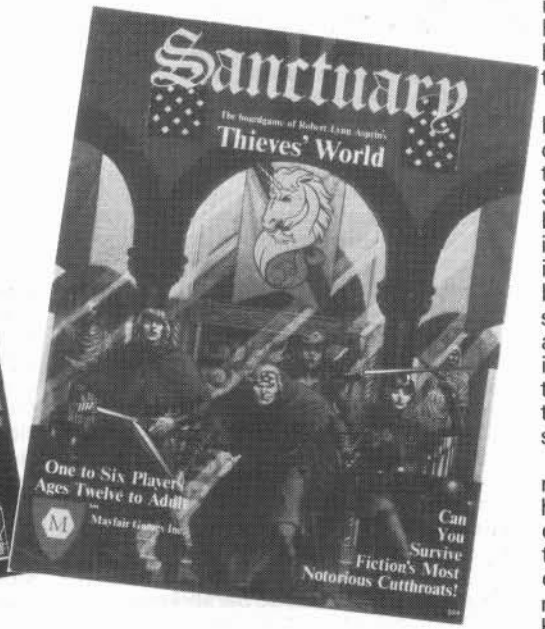
The first volume is concerned with character generation, derived from nine prime characteristics via a point allocation system. Social and religious status and race are determined early in the process, and are the most important factors in defining a new character. *C&S* assumes that all adventurers are *not* created equal, a fortunate few belong to the chivalric classes, and get to ride horses, rescue maidens, and joust, while the vast majority are peasants, guildsmen, and other common riff-raff, and get to grovel a lot.

Use of the character generation rules is rather difficult, since it's often hard to work out what should be done next. A character generation checklist would be a real advantage in using this section. A typical character's record would also be helpful. Another point insufficiently stressed is that it is important to note every number produced since some are needed in later parts of the generation process without being noted on the character sheet. Overall, character generation in *C&S* is still extremely complicated and might take inexperienced players several hours, especially if they make the fatal mistake of working in the wrong order.

Skill acquisition in *C&S* is almost indescribably complex, and involves at least three distinct systems, governing a combination of automatically and voluntarily acquired skills. Automatically learned skills are things like hiding, counting (not too easy if the character has skill level 0), and estimating distance. Vocational skills are restricted to a few classes but are acquired automatically with level rises. Finally, acquired experience skills are things like a thief's skill, or the acquisition of weapon skills outside those normally available to a class. They can be purchased with experience points (normally used to increase level), thus giving the character a better chance of success at the expense of his or her future advancement.

Characters earn experience for all the usual actions, plus things like championing fair maidens and deeds of valour. Each class has extra experience points available for proper use of available skills and talents. Magicians, for example, get points for simply being a magician, or for enchanting objects or learning spells. An extremely important point in this procedure is the final stage, known as 'pro-rating', which determines the skill level at which a character actually begins his or her career. It's just possible for a





character to start at the equivalent of eleventh level, although more advisable to trade off some of the initial experience points for extra skills and knowledge. Similarly, characters may begin their careers with fairly substantial wealth. Once again, a checklist which made it clear that this is part of the character generation process would be a real help.

Volume 2 covers the chivalric way of life, economics and the purchase of equipment, the church (Christian), and the formal and informal conduct of combat. The latter section uses a system alternating two combat turns in each five minute game turn. The method is similar to *RuneQuest*, with skill rolls used to strike blows and armour absorbing damage without making a hit less likely. Referees with old rulebooks should note that the armour rules have been changed and that the mass combat system for large scale battles has been omitted since it has no role-playing application. Anyone who needs mass combat rules can find them in the new *C&S Sourcebook*, available separately.

The third volume covers magic (spelt Magick), summoned and natural monsters, the undead, and NPCs. Magicians use magic to gain magical skill and knowledge – all other uses are secondary. The *C&S* Magic user is thus a sort of scholar cum sage, dedicating his life to the pursuit of arcane lore.

The monsters range from sheep (no attacks), through four pages of normal and giant sized animals, to demons and the monsters of legend and folklore. Arthurians will find both the Blatant and Questing Beast, while Arabian campaigns might use Rocs. There's also the usual assortment of Hippogriffs, Manticores, and of course Dragons. Several of the monsters may be used as player characters, at the referees' discretion, including Trolls, Giants, and even Vampires. Nearly all the legendary monsters are much tougher than their equivalents in other role-playing games, and can only really be tackled by a fairly large party or an extremely powerful character. Dragons are probably the toughest monsters of all, but most follow the chivalric code and can possibly be persuaded that their actions are dishonourable. This tactic won't always work and is not for the faint hearted.

Probably the best feature of these rules is their attention to detail, expressed in such minutiae as the tables used to develop the exact culinary skills of player characters (which give Vampires an extremely good chance of being Cordon Bleu chefs), tables for Eye and Hair colour, and the detailed descriptions of all the Demon Lords. At the same time, this gives a set of rules which is complex and occasionally excessively confusing.

I cannot recommend this game to inexperienced referees or players, but anyong with some knowledge of role-playing games who is looking for a complex system for a prolonged campaign will probably find *Chivalry and Sorcery* ideal. It's also an extremely good source of ideas for other games. If the rules were slightly better organised and the set gave more aid in character generation and setting up campaigns I would not have these reservations.

The size of the box suggests that the manufacturers may have originally planned to include more material, such as a sample scenario or the *C&S Sourcebook*. If they had, my ratings would probably be higher.

Presentation:	**10**	**Enjoyment:**	**8**
Rules:	**7**	**Skill:**	**10**
Playability:	**6**	**Complexity:**	**10**
Overall:	**8**		

Marcus L Rowland

SANCTUARY
Mayfair Games Inc **£12.95**

The *Thieves' World* series of fantasy stories supply the characters and the setting for *Sanctuary*, and the game has been designed in consultation with Robert Asprin. Boardgames drawn directly from fantasy and science fiction stories are becoming more common, but a successful plot in fiction does not necessarily breed a successful game. Fortunately the designer, Bill Fawcett, has kept it simple and has not attempted to follow a particular story line.

Sanctuary is packed into a colourful box, the cover art picturing a motley crew of 'fiction's most Notorious Cutthroats'. Inside is a map of the city of Sanctuary, mounted on four separate boards, which fit together ingeniously in jigsaw fashion. This is an excellent idea, which makes sure that the map is both easy to pack in the box and easy to set up on a playing surface without any annoying crinkles or ridges. Also included are ten plastic playing pieces, two sheets of cardboard silver pieces, two packs of cards, a rulebook, a ten-sided and two six-sided dice.

Setting the scene at the start of the rulebook is a short tale, which explains how the new governor of Sanctuary came into residence, bringing with him the Hell Hound guards, who form the opposition to the thievish players. (Worried thieves should note that these Hell Hounds are mere men and not the fantastical beasts of the same name!) Up to six may play the game, five as thieves and if there are six players, the sixth as the governor. The thieves move around the city in response to rumours of potential robberies outlined on Rumour cards. Having avoided the guards and reached the location specified on the card, the thief acquires a greater or lesser number of silver pieces depending upon the prosperity of the lawful owner. The first player to steal 300 silver pieces and hide them in his or her secret cache, wins. The city locations include, amongst other, the Maze, where the mass of lawbreakers live, the Fisherman's Row Wharf, the Bazaar and the Avenue of Temples. Event cards drawn each turn may whisk players away to far flung parts of the city, give useful magic items, supply maps of the sewers (who wants to be lost in the sewers?), or cause players to miss a turn while listening to Hakiem telling a story!

The Basic Game is simple and lasts only about one hour. A slightly more complicated Advanced Game introduces rules for hiring thugs, different types of theft - burglary, mugging and picking pockets , and 'casing the joint'. In the solitaire version the player is the governor, Prince Kadakithis. He controls the Hell Hound guards and aims to see the triumph of Law and Order over the nefarious power of the thieves.

Sanctuary will appeal to those seeking an uncomplicated game for all age ranges from twelve years old upwards. The rules are not long, and neither are they difficult to understand. There are one or two minor ambiguities, which should have been ironed out, but common sense can solve these small problems. The artwork is of a good standard, though the backs of the cards, as in all Mayfair games, are plain except for the Mayfair logo, which means that the players can only tell the packs apart by colour. Overall, *Sanctuary* is a good buy for the family.

Presentation:	**8**	**Enjoyment:**	**7**
Rules:	**6**	**Skill:**	**3**
Playability:	**7**	**Complexity:**	**3**
Overall: 7			

Alan E Paull

Critical Mass *is a regular book review column, written by Dave Langford. This issue kicks off with praise for a new author, Mary Gentle..*

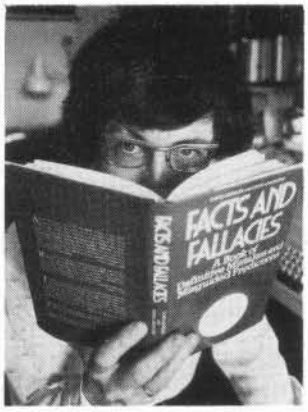


Photo: Reading Evening Post

Langford cowers pitifully behind his own remaindered work, hoping to escape identification by murderous Robert P Faulcon fans.

From Gentle to Gorey

What I'd like to pick up in a dungeon is a *Ring of Unfailing Literary Judgement*, enabling me to merely lay one hand on a book's cover before writing the usual flawless and perceptive review. As it is, each month I'm strapped down in the torture chambers far beneath the Dark Tower of Sunbeam Road, my eyes are cruelly wired open as seen in *A Clockwork Orange*, and page by remorseless page the evilly grinning editors force me to read the latest accumulation of review books. Luckily there are compensations...

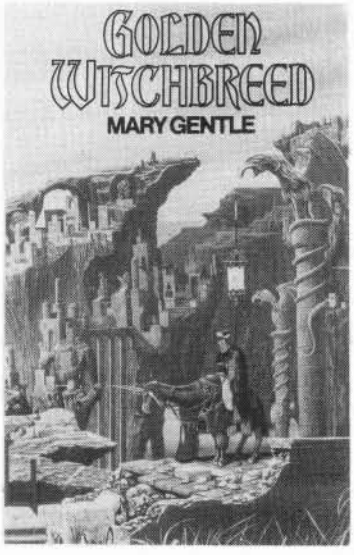
Here's one. *Golden Witchbreed* by Mary Gentle [*Gollancz* 479pp £8.95] is the SF debut of a young British author who *Gollancz* plainly think will go far: not everyone gets such a nicely produced book and jacket. (Don't read the blurb, which crudely reveals points Gentle prefers to keep up her auctorial sleeve until past page 100.)

Despite two pages of characters' names at the front and twenty maps and appendices at the back, this isn't the usual fantasy quest epic. Christie, the narrator, is Earth's envoy to the planet Orthe, and spends most of the book among the disconcertingly humanlike natives. Their social and political structure has been carefully worked out; there's a suitable amount of intrigue in a bewildering complication of factions, with the power-play mirrored illuminatingly in the native game *ochmir*, a vague relative of reversi which sounds quite playable.

But this isn't a high-tension political thriller; it's a low-key (indeed, a gentle) account of Christie's submersion in Orthean culture, with generous helpings of the sort of telling detail which makes a world real. Orthe feels real. Its surprises aren't brain-warping science fiction bogglements; they creep up on you in a slow cumulative way, as Orthe lulls Christie into thinking she understands more than she does, until its alienness breaks out again in unexpected facets of sexuality, ethics or priorities. And because the secrets of Orthe aren't given a huge build-up as riddles of the universe, the revelations don't (as in lesser books) fall flat.

Golden Witchbreed is not for those who demand slambang action and exploding suns. Its leisurely opening will irritate some: Gentle is almost arrogant in her refusal to do anything quick and obvious by way of narrative hook. Eventually, though, you wish the book were longer. The author writes with enviable calmness and assurance, and has produced a remarkably good novel.

From the sublime to... well, let's not be snide. The *Nighthunter* horror series by Robert P Faulcon is published by *Arrow*, three volumes to date: *The Stalking* [199pp £1.50], *The Talisman* [200pp £1.50], *The Ghost Dance* [192pp £1.60]. After collecting his royalties Faulcon vanishes into a telephone booth to emerge in his secret identity of Robert P Holdstock, promising SF author also known to the Review Police as film novelizer Robert P Black, *Berserker* series



author Chris P Carlsen and other aliases.

Because Holdstock chose not to write these under his own name, I expected hack rubbish; and *The Stalking* is a bit routine, with major atrocities or supernatural outbreaks appearing regularly every 9 or 10 pages, people's gorges constantly rising at foetid stenches, and a peak of fine writing when someone's head 'suddenly began to peel, the flesh tearing away from the bone in ragged strips, like a pink banana'. Yuk. But even here Holdstock is getting involved despite himself, and there's much inventive material on psychic defences which makes Dennis Wheatley's pentacles look like the thin stuff that they are. Book 2 is better, with old Norse nasties deployed to useful effect, plus original twists; Book 3 seems better again, with American Indian dark forces this time.

The continuing plot? Oh, the hero's family is abducted by evil cultists in Book 1, and he spends the rest of the series in not-too-close pursuit. Horror fans could do worse than these books. (The third has a cross-reference to Holdstock's *Necromancer*, published under his own name and a superior example of the genre.)

Staying Alive: A Writer's Guide by Norman Spinrad [*Donning Company*, 162pp, $5.95] isn't a textbook on writing SF/fantasy, nor is it likely to help writers stay alive, but it provides appropriately gloomy insights into the workings of the industry. Spinrad reveals incredibly sleazy details of the economic forces behind SF publishing, making you wonder how you could ever have been so naive as to think a good book will do well or even sell at all. Spinrad's good on punchy facts, but writes with remarkable sloppiness considering he's a professional *and* leader of the SF Writers of America. In his *Bug Jack Barron* one used to wait cringing for the next, far to frequent, appearance of the term 'the nitty-gritty'; here he seems unable to stop saying 'the bottom line' or calling publishing bosses 'mavens'. Part of the reason for reptition and bad style is that *Staying Alive* is hastily assembled from columns written for a fanzine; though he's added new material, Spinrad has explicitly chosen not to revise the old stuff. In addition, even as he denounces the hideous effects of corporate politics and accountancy on SF publishing, he plainly relishes and can't stop using the soulless jargon of Big Money and Big Hype with all its horrid incantatory value Illuminating, but a pain to read.

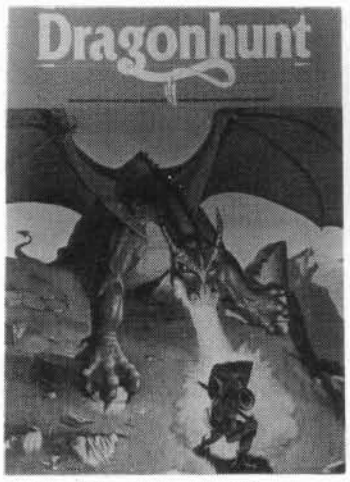
Two issues ago, I mentioned J G Ballard's *Hello America* [*Granada* 236pp £1.50]. As I suspected, this is the book for those who think they don't like Ballard: set in an America being rediscovered after its collapse, it's full of marvellous things, from New York choked with golden sand to Los Angeles in a rain forest. It satirizes Ballard's own surreal version of the American Dream — I mean, a platoon of 44 robot US Presidents charging into action! — and ends with absurd optimism. Excellent.

Something completely different: *Methuen* have produced Edward Lear's *The Jumblies* and *The Dong with a Luminous Nose* in one volume [88pp £2.50], with drawings by the strange and macabre Edward Gorey. W H Auden with particular reference to the Dong, once observed that Lear was the only poet to have been visibly influenced by Poe — so grab this one, fantasy fans. Meanwhile, Gorey is something of a cult figure whose works, when available at all over here, are usually absurdly expensive — this paperback is a bargain. Hey, *Methuen*, how about affordable editions of eldritch Goreybooks like *The Vinegar Works* or *Amphigorey*?

To readers who answered last issue's questionnaire and managed to feign enthusiasm for the book reviews, this column says: thank you, thank you both. To those who demanded that Langford be cast without further ado into a radioactive furnace, this column says: aha, subliminal messages tuned to warp your psyche have been included in this page, programming you with a deep subconscious compulsion to lose any future game you may play. (Rush me a fiver for the antidote.)□

Counterpoint *is a bi-monthly boardgame column, edited by Charles Vasey. This issue, Charles takes a look at two fantasy boardgames.*

Titan Hunts Dragon



Dragonhunt by *Avalon Hill* is never going to rouse the yearning masses hungry for the gaming sensation that's sweeping the nation; its designer might reasonably object that a) it's making him money, and b) it will probably be played more times by more people than the sort of high-brow rubbish I am likely to go into ecstasies over. He might also write an incredibly banal and long-winded reply, because that is exactly how he writes his rules.

Dragonhunt proceeds from the sort of formula fiction that used to louse up SF and has now moved to afflict fantasy writing, Tolkien without the grandeur, Moorcock without the originality, it's not pretty. The game's hook is a big dragon called Brimstone (presumably because a dragon called Treacle would rate low on the Scareometer) which is not actually controlled by any one player (hey guys we could call him a 'non player character', NPC – great huh?) but manoeuvres randomly according to sundry charts and die rolling. The dragon lives on top of a mountain from which he issues forth to move around on a series of die-rolls each turn. Hang on though, maybe I am misleading you there because each *hand* is divided into four *turns* of three *rounds* each, and of course a growth *phase*. This may sound odd, that is because it reads oddly, but is not quite as strange when you play the game very carefully. Anyway up the dragon moves in the first round of each turn, each player moving him once. If the dragon happens upon other units, villages, castles etc he tends to close for action with both dice blazing. At this point he consults the 'Brimstone attacks' table! The results range through dead defenders and burning villages to wounded Brimstone. You may also get to draw a dragon card. These can lead to a much wider range of results for Brimstone which make for such events being worrisome for all the players. After the temper tantrum Brimstone tends to naff off to the mountain to sleep the sleep of the unjust.

Naturally wherever fear and desolation dwell a number of brave men will rise up to prove that playing football without a helmet can lead to terminal heroism. Set out around the board are six castles each of which is ruled by a hero. The heroes' domains each contain (sign for them) one castle, one village and one cottage. A cottage I hear you ejaculate, what of moment occurs there. It is here that units go to be healed I reply, making it (and I am sure no such wit was intended by Donner) a cottage hospital. These are run by the Red Cross and no other army would be so naughty as to enter the sacred bounds (although one or two have been known to hang about outside while dusting their knuckles). These edifices contain the hero's army of knights, men-at-arms and snipers. With them he can engage in two strategies; he can be an empire-builder capturing villages and castles so as to increase the size of his army, or he can attack the dragon. It is noticeable that players tend to go for empire-building, but the victory conditions involve getting Brimstone and slaying him.

To do this you either attack with the hero alone (he needs room to swing his enormous engorged sword) or with his rough and spotted soldiery. This pre vents the dragon being roughed up too easily, although how this is supposed to work in real-life I do not know (Sorry, chaps, it's got to be either the hero or the rest of you, I simply cannot countenance death at the hands of both). The first wound is bad enough but getting the second and third is worse, as the pesky worm clearly remembers you. Once you have racked up three wounds (and recovered from the losses Brimstone has inflicted upon you, the recovery rates are pretty generous by the way which is why empire-building is less effective) then you receive free, one guaranteed Magesword. Mageswords were clearly the Exocet of their day because only a Magesword can kill. The final battle involves the use of a multi-bit dragon counter set. You throw a dice. If that number bit of the dragon survives, it gets 'kills'. If it does not, then you lose a magical defence counter. The latter come from sundry game functions, but mainly from a die-roll plus strength when you acquire the Magesword. You will swiftly guess that after maybe two hours of play you will be sitting there trying to throw the number of the last dragon 'bit'.

A final fantasy element to really grab you fantasy buffs and make you sit up is Fantastic Beings. These sundry wierdies also troll around the map in varying stages of player control doing magical things. At times they appear very boring, at others they add an element of anarchic fun among the battle-lines of empires. Only two Fantastic Beings are in play at any one time and each has a good range of different abilities. They do not however bear any real affinity with the rest of the game's story-line. Donner's Fantastic Beings look depressingly like an identification parade for *D&D* characters.

Dragonhunt is not, you will by now have guessed, one of my favourite games. Neither is it quite so cretinous as I may have implied, it can be fun but does not really impress. *Titan* also by *Avalon Hill* does impress, however. It comes with rules as concise as *Dragonhunt* is verbose, and with counters that rival *Chaosium*.

Titan has no real story-line worthy of the name. You play on Titan, a series of differing terrain type triangles. You control legions of creatures and sundry angels and Titans (that's you Jack) which trog around either fighting or mustering fresh units. Movement is regulated into a series of circuits by a very innovative system of triangle-edge movement keys. You muster fresh units once per legion on the basis of the terrain. Certain kinds of units can be recruited in certain types of terrain. If you possess two of one kind it may also be possible to recruit one 'higher' being using a sort of evolutionary tree. Combat involves the concepts of power and skill. Power determines the number of dice you throw (and hits you take) and skill, how fast you move and how easy it is for you to score hits. You fight on tactical boards according to the terrain type of triangle. That rather short summary contains a great deal of the facts you need to know. *Titan* games are fought against the opposing players, not the Dyslexic Designer.

The game is not only tightly designed, it is pretty vicious. If you go into a fight, then only one side can survive, and if the attacker does not win within a certain time-frame in each battle he is defeated. The more you win the more powerful your Titan becomes *and* any wounds taken in battle are healed once you win. This folks is monetarist boardgaming! If you do not mash the others then they will sure as hell mash you. For this very reason I would not recommend that you play *Titan* against players who are much more experienced than you. As a channel for conflict *Titan* is greatly to be preferred to *Dragonhunt* and (with a time-limit on turns) could become a multi-player classic.

There is one last feature to consider – which game is the truest to the concept of fantasy gaming. *Titan's* counters certainly are splendidly evocative and remind us how much *Chaosium* has increased standards since the first *Dragon Pass* period. The system however is so clean and abstracted that its connections to fantasy literature appear only slightly better than chess' connection to ancient warfare. *Dragonhunt*, to be sure, has all the props of fantasy literature but it is the worst kind of literature written by people who have read too many *TSR* press releases before eating a cheese sandwich. The answer is doubtless that it depends on you and your approach to gaming and fantasy. For those of you who are in reality peaceable fellows I fear it's *Dragonhunt* but for all the little Darth Vaders out there grab your copy of *Titan*. The latter is certainly the most impressive of the two.□

DEALING WITH DEMONS

Part 3: The Demonic Nobility by Dave Morris

This is the final part in our three part series on Demons in RuneQuest. *This issue we present the Greater Demons, in all their terrifying power.*

The demon lords and princes are individual beings of immense power who rule the demon planes. They have, of course, been summoned far less frequently than the lesser demons, so no exact canon of knowledge is available as with the latter. A summoner who does some research may find suggestions and theories as to how to deal with the demon lords ("... Rokash the Pious records that the powers of the Lord Eldyr are diminished by bright light..." etc), but exact wards – if any – are a matter of conjecture.

Similarly there is some uncertainty as to the precise levels of power of the demon lords. Tsienra's stats are given here as a guideline, but Referees must design these creatures to suit their own campaigns. They should be virtually impossible to overcome with raw power alone, and if your campaign abounds with 150%-plus Rune Lord-Priests then the abilities of Tsienra and the others should be increased accordingly. When the demon lords have suffered defeats in the past it has been through the summoner's quick wit and daring, rather than from spells and swords.

As a general rule demon lords will have personal POW between 80 and 100, and can draw on unlimited POW reserves from their home dimension for casting battle magic. They are *hostile* about 20% of the time and otherwise *neutral*. They will only be *friendly* if there is a very good reason why they should react favourably to the summoner – Umalu prefers Chaotic berserkers, and so on.

The Gifts

While not precluding the possibility of striking completely unique bargains with a summoned demon lord, there are two types of deal which are 'commonly' made. These are the *Lesser Gifts* – minor exertions from the demon's point of view, made in exchange for characteristic POW from the summoner – and the *Greater Gifts* – permanent abilities bestowed on the summoner in exchange for a *soul-pledge*. A soul-pledge means the summoner gives the demon 1 POW point to seal the bargain and promises him a further 3d10 POW points later. These further points are intended to be collected on the summoner's death, but there is a 2% chance the demon will arrive if it feels the summoner's life-force is burning low – in game terms, whenever the character's hit points or POW reach 2 or less . Once the demon arrives nothing can stop it from devouring the POW promised to it. These POW points are permanently lost to the character, at which point the soul-pledge is ended and he loses the Greater Gift. If he survives the POW loss he can later bargain again for a Greater Gift, either with the same or with a different demon lord. A character can buy any number of Lesser Gifts from demon lords (if he can spare the POW), but it is only possible to have one Greater Gift at

a time. Note that to receive *any* gift, at least 200 wheels or equivalent must also be offered.

The Demons
There are a number of others which could not be listed here – among them, Pazuzu, Lord of Fevers, ruler of the lesser demons which bear his name; Bakshuro the Screamer, who inhabits a dimension so hostile that only he can live there; Valladolyn of the Emerald Eye, who sees all, and Lady Kleshkala of the Pit, whose face is so terrible that merely to summon her is to court insanity.

The three important parameters for each demon lord are his or her *Resistance to Summoning, Resistance to Binding* and *Cross Pentacle* ability. The last is applied as a negative modifier to the summoner's chance of correctly drawing the Pentacle of Protection.

	Resistance to Binding	*Resistance to Summoning*	*Cross Pentacle Ability*
Adelmar	100%	75%	60%
Akresh	85%	50%	20%
Eldyr	80%	40%	20%
Engala	80%	40%	25%
Hragahl	75%	55%	20%
Kesh	80%	40%	20%
Kojuro	85%	45%	15%
Kyrax	90%	55%	30%
Sarasathsa	90%	55%	40%
Tsienra	85%	50%	35%
Umalu	80%	40%	30%

The Lord Tsienra, Screaming Metal Spirit, Demon of Ferocity.
Tsienra usually appears as a metallic figure, something like a huge tiger armoured in intricately patterned plates of tarnished silver and with a violet light burning behind his eyes and gaping maw. He embodies the lightning attack, the unrelenting ferocity of battle, the prowling spirit of savage death. Possession by the spirit of Tsienra gives great speed and grace to the recipient's fighting prowess.

Greater Gift: Tsienra can give the power of *ferocity*. When a character with this power uses it, his STR and DEX are effectively increased to species maximum for combat purposes, 35% is added to his Attack chance and 10% is subtracted from his Parry. The character expends two points of battle magic POW to go into *ferocity* and then another point for every full turn he keeps it going.

Lesser Gifts: For the sacrifice of one POW point, Tsienra will teach his summoner the battle magic spell *the talons of tsienra* (see below). For two POW points he will use his skill at stalking between the planes to take the summoner within a few miles of any location he specifies, now matter how great the distance. For three points of POW he will enchant any sword with a permanent *bladesharp 2*. Adelmar can also add to a character's lifespan – five years for one POW, then years for two POW, fifteen years for four POW and so on. A character can only petition for this gift once. During the added years the character does not age, but the deal must be phrased with exceptional caution or Adelmar will surely twist things to the summoner's detriment.

Lord Tsienra

STR:	44	Right hind leg	(01-02)	14/15
CON:	21	Left hind leg	(03-04)	14/15
SIZ:	34	Hindquarters	(05-07)	14/16
INT:	25	Forequarters	(08-10)	14/16
POW:	85	Right foreleg	(11-13)	14/15
DEX:	28	Left foreleg	(14-16)	14/15
CHA:	30	Head	(17-20)	14/15

Move: 12
Hit Points: 45
Defence: 160%
Attacks: Bite (1d10+1+4d6) SR4, 150%. Claw (1d8+4d6) SR4, 180%. (Count as *severblades*.)
Spells: Any (variable spells to 8 points). Rune Magic – *concealment; dismiss elemental 3; extension 3; multispell 2; spirit block 3; shield 4; vision; teleport.*
Skills: Stealth 120%; Perception 180%; Leaping (20m) 100%.

Tsienra can make one bite attack and two claw attacks in the same round. These do not all have to be against a single opponent. By splitting his attacks he can make even more strikes in one round, of course. Like most demon lords he can cast any standard battle magic spell by drawing POW from his home plane. When he casts a Rune spell he pays for it using his own POW, just as a normal being would pay for battle magic. Like all demon lords, Tsienra is immune to non-Runic weapons.

The Talons of Tsienra
POW used: 4 points
Type: passive, unfocused, temporal

This battle magic spell causes 30cm talons of red light to spring from the caster's wrists. He can fight with these using either Fist or Dagger skill – the *talons* do only 1d4 damage (no STR/SIZ bonuses apply), but the *only* effective defence against this is the Rune spell *shield*, which absorbs one point from the *talons'* damage for each point of *shield*. The *talons* are immaterial, so parrying a weapon with them will damage but not deflect it. The spell can only be learned from Tsienra himself, and if the character tries to teach it to someone else then Tsienra will materialize unbidden and kill him.

His Fell Highness Eldyr, Prince of Deceit, Demon of Persuasion.
Eldyr is overlord of Incubi, Succubi and Gremlins. He may pass in any guise he chooses, the better to advance his wiles, but will always eventually cast images aside to reveal his true (*perhaps* true) self. In the Chronicles of the Conjunction, Eldyr's own description of himself is recorded: 'My hair is like black silk, my skin is burnished copper in the moonlight, my eyes are sapphires and my robe embraces the starry night...' This description was for the benefit of the elven sorceress Cordelia, who had wisely blindfolded herself before the summoning. Without defences such as this, all in time succumb to Eldyr's charms; the evocator must attempt to banish him at once, therefore, if he begins to use his powers in a hostile fashion.

Greater Gift: Eldyr can give the power of *harmonic spirit*. This is a combination of charm and blind luck. It costs nothing to activate this power, but each morning the character must roll POWx5 or less on percentile dice to see if the power works for that day; this chance is increased by 15% if the power was working the previous day, and decreased by 5% if it was not. Any luck roll the character has to make has a 50% chance of working automatically without him having to roll for it; on a roll of 05 or less he may have quite incredible luck – a 20m fall broken by some bushes, for instance. He gets a CHA bonus of +4 and can use his CHA as an Incubus or Succubus does. Finally, he gets an Oratory bonus of +35%.

Lesser Gifts: For one POW point, he will aid a character in an attempt to persuade others of something. He gives the character a 45% bonus to his persuasion chances for one use only – and this must be some matter where the character's chance of persuasion was at least 10% in the first place. The bonus is reduced to 10% – 30% in attempts to bargain with demon lords because Eldyr's powers work only erratically against his peers. For two points of POW Eldyr will give a *luck ring*. This silver ring has 100 charges and each charge can be used to change the chance of something happening by 1%. The event to be influenced must occur within 100m of the wearer and have at least a 10% chance of happening in the first place; you can't make a healthy warrior suddenly die of a heart attack, for example. The wearer must declare how many charges he is committing before the roll is made. When all charges are expended the ring permanently tarnishes and is powerless thereafter.

The Lord Umalu, the Whip of Chaos, Demon of Pain.
The spirit of Umalu is that of glorying in the inflicting of pain. He is a fierce, powerful demon who hates Lawful creatures.

▷with an intense passion and is little better disposed towards being of Chaos. Umalu manifests himself as a 3m tall muscular black giant with a long mane of white hair, face perpetually contorted in hatred. He wields a glittering whip which can bestow *Reverse Chaos* features and an envenomed shortsword which inflicts terrible wounds.

Greater Gifts: Umalu can bestow *Chaos* on a character, giving him or her a Chaotic feature. He can also give the power of *excruciation*, so that any wound the character inflicts has a 20% chance of dealing an extra 1d8 damage to the victim's hit point total owing to extreme pain.

Lesser Gifts: In exchange for one point of POW he will teach a character an extra 20% in the Torture skill. For two points he grants the Rune spell *curse of anguish* (see below). For three points of POW he will personally torture a captive to obtain information on the summoner's behalf.

Curse of Anguish
Range: 160m
POW used: 2 points
Duration: Permanent, Non-reusable, Not stackable

The caster of the Rune spell is able to inflict wracking pain on a victim if he can overcome his POW. He can alter the victim's hit point total at will to represent the pain, and can thus force the victim into unconsciousness, vary the pain so that he must fight at a disadvantage, or merely threaten him with the effects. The *curse of anguish* cannot kill – its victim will merely lapse into a coma if the pain level is increased too far. This spell does not affect undead, elementals or other creatures which do not actually experience pain.

Torture
Torture is a manipulation skill with a base score of 15% and is learned at the rates 200/400/800/EXP. Normally a character must join the Guild of Torturers to learn the skill. A successful Torture roll means that the torturer has extracted all or part (40%+ 1d6x10%) of the truth from his captive, failure means that he has got false information. A fumble means that the captive has died. Torture can usually be used only once a day on a given captive – each extra use in the same day doubles the chance of a fumble. Captives can use their CON+POW as a 'Defence' against the Torture 'Attack' if they wish.

His Demonic Majesty Adelmar, Lord of the Vaults of Eternity, Monarch of Demons.
Summon the terrible Adelmar only when you plan such grand designs of mayhem and destruction as would make lesser demons quail, for he is a proud and potent force and should not be summoned lightly. Standing about 2½m tall, he is ebony-black with the lower body of a serpent, a human torso and an armoured, horned head like that of a triceratops. He wields enchanted scimitars in each hand – one of which feeds on the blood of victims, the other on their souls. Adelmar is said to dwell in a labyrinthine castle on an island in an unknown lake; when Adelmar is summoned, the evocator and his party (up to six others) are carried to this castle to petition the demon.

Greater Gifts: Adelmar has a limited power over time itself, and can give the ability of *temporal navigation*. This enables a character to cross up to ten years either into the past or future, arriving within 1-12 weeks either side of the required date. Each use of *temporal navigation* costs the character 1d4 from characteristic POW.

Lesser Gifts: For one point of POW Adelmar will open the veils of Time to uncover some secret at the summoner's behest. For three points he will send an army of demonic warriors – equivalent to five thousand elite cavalry – to fight in one battle beside the army of the summoner (or his employer).

The Lord Akresh, Spirit of Thunder in the Mountains, Demon of Invincibility.
Akresh represents steadfast strength of purpose, the glowering look that intimidates a foe, the essence of power that cannot be assailed. Possession by the spirit of Akresh is called *waiting-within-a-fortress*; it hardens the will, shields the body from harm and augments the recipient's physical might. Akresh himself can only be evoked in mountains, where he may appear as a shadow against the sky and a booming echo between the peaks.

Greater Gift: The power that Akresh can grant is *indomitability*. A character with this power must roll POWx5 or less on d100 whenever he wants to use it; once activated, the power costs two points of battle magic POW for each full turn the character wishes to use it. While *indominable* the character remains fixed in position waiting for attacks. He can automatically sweep aside all attacks made at 25% or lower, including missile attacks; his STR increases to species maximum; he gets a +20% Parry bonus and any parries he makes do an extra 1d4 damage to the parried weapon. Finally, he gets an extra point of armour protection.

Lesser Gifts: For one point of POW Akresh will teach two points of the battle magic spell *parry* (usually available only to Humakti). For two points he can enchant any shield so that whoever carries it has a permanent *protection 1*. For three points he will summon mountain storms that can throw whole armies into confusion, or block a pass with landslides.

Her Eldritch Highness Sarasathsa, Princess of Mystery, Demon of Paradox.
Sarasathsa has sovereignty over things impenetrable or unknowable. Possession with her spirit-essence renders the recipient immune to spirit combat, as spirits will recoil from her terrible mysteries, but is double-edged in that the recipient could become sunk into lethargy and pensive introspection (roll POWx5 or less when coming out of *possession* to avoid this). Sarasathsa may have many forms, but is often described as a very tall (2½m), slender, graceful woman in blue and green robes. Her skin is pale and mottled in a serpentine pattern, and the right side of her face is concealed behind a fantastical mask in the form of an embryonic dragon. All summoners describe her as cold and disdainful and rather draconic in temprament.

Greater Gift: Sarasathsa can grant *morphetic counsel*. Whenever the character has some problem to solve or mystery to uncover she will whisper clues to him in his dreams. This acts as though the character had 80% in the General Knowledge skill, and also allows him important visionary dreams at the Referee's discretion.

Lesser Gifts: For one point of POW she will answer any three yes/no questions about the past or present with 99% accuracy. For two points she will convert any powered crystal into another type which the summoner specifies (the crystal's POW is diminished by 1 by this process). For three points she grants a character a permanent 5% bonus on POW gain rolls.

The Lord Kojuro, Who is One with the Sword, Demon of Fighting Skill.
Kojuro appears as a slender man with greyish skin and sharp white shark's teeth. He wears white and grey cotton robes and carries a number of swords and throwing knives. His province is skill in combat, particularly swordplay.

Greater Gift: Kojuro can immediately raise a character's skill with swords to 80% or by 15%, whichever is greater.

Lesser Gifts: For one POW point Kojuro will increase a character's score in any fighting skill by 5%, to a maximum of 75%. For two POW points he will place a single-use *truesword* spell on a blade; this spell can be activated at any later time by whoever wields the sword. For three POW points he will increase the skill of an entire army by 5% for a single battle.

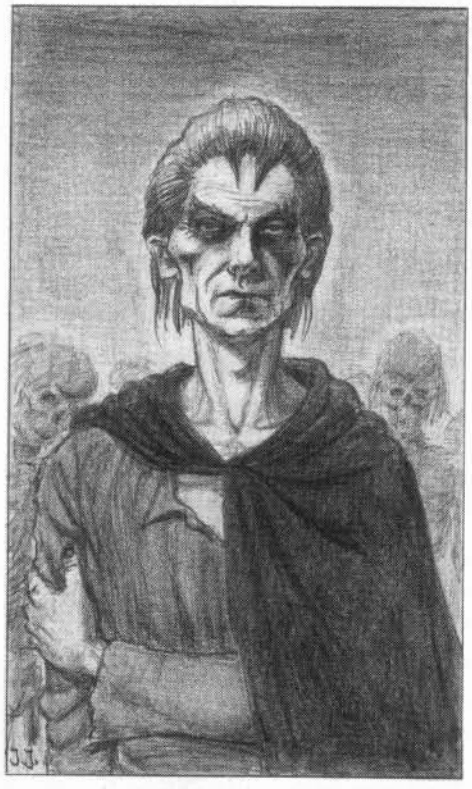
The Lord Kesh, Jewelled Serpent, Demon of Confusion and Terror.
Kesh embodies the transfixing gaze of a snake. He causes awe by his presence alone, a massive bejewelled, serpentine shape coiling about the Pentacle and rearing up to the roof of the summoning chamber – the summoner must roll

POWx5 or less on d100 or lose all power to bargain with the demon. Looking into Kesh's eyes causes *demoralization*.

Greater Gift: Kesh grants the power of *intimidation*. Given two rounds in which to talk to foes before he fights them, a character with this power can threaten with such unholy force that those hearing him must roll POWx5 or less on percentile dice or be *demoralized*. In combat, the character's gaze can transfix like a vampire's.

Lesser Gifts: For one POW point Kesh will reveal the location of an ancient treasure hoard of at least 90 treasure factors. For two points he will set a giant demonic serpent to guard your treasure for you. For three points he will teach you how to brew any venom or acid up to potency 15.

Demonic serpent (Servant of Kesh)
STR: 4d6+12
CON: 1d6+12
SIZ: 2d6+15
POW: 2d6+6
DEX: 2d6+10
Move: 8
Hit Points: 19 average
Armour: 6-point skin
Attacks: Bite (3d6 + potency 4 blade venom) SR1, 75%.
Crush (3d6 [like a python] SR6, 60%.
Skills: Move Quietly 90%; Hide in Treasure 80%.



The Lord Engala, Gatherer of Darkness, Demon of the Undead.
Engala is usually characterized as the zombie spirit, embodiment of unrelenting attack, but in fact he is the lord of all undead creatures. Engala appears as a dull-eyed, expressionless man with dead white skin, robed in grave-soiled black raiment. His movements are slow and lanquid, like a corpse underwater, and when he speaks his lips hardly move to his hollow, emotionless tones. Those possessed by his spirit will fight until cut apart.

Greater Gift: Engala can make a character into a vampire or mummy. The customary pledge of POW is useless to Engala because he is an undead being, so instead of that pledge he imposes a peculiar condition on his Gift. Every ten years the character must find a champion to play Engala's representative at a game not unlike chess. If the champion loses, Engala drains him of POW and destroys him. If the character cannot *find* a champion he must play Engala's representative himself – in this case, if he loses, Engala will come and take the character as one of his personal servants.

Lesser Gifts: In exchange for a powered crystal Engala will give a lead amulet which grants the wearer some protection from undead – *hostile* undead act *neutrally* and *neutral* undead will be *friendly*, as per the *RuneQuest* response table. Occasionally he may give favoured summoners a zombie or skeleton guard to serve them.

The Lord Kyrax, Blizzard Flame, the White Lord, He Who Descends from the Storm.
Kyrax is one of the oldest demons. He has the form of a giant white wolf, or sometimes a man of feral aspect. He is the master of stealth and guile, can cause *invisibility*, blizzards and darkness and particularly aids those who were once mighty, for he is the demon lord of regathering old powers.

Greater Gifts: Kyrax can grant a character 70% in all Stealth skills or raise these by 20%. Or he may personally aid a character in a single master plan.

Lesser Gifts: For one POW point he will increase a single Stealth or Tracking skill by 10%. For two POW he will give a one use Rune spell to summon thick mist in a 160m radius; the caster can see up to 30m in this mist but for others the visibility is under 10m. For three POW he will summon a blizzard or turn a character invisible for eight hours.

His Excellency Hragahl, Minister of Lightning, Demon of Intellect.
This bizarre and ancient demon lord is master of all matters connected with logic and philosophy, and if he is impressed by a summoner's ability in these areas he will have a *friendly* reaction to him. Hragahl materializes as a giant (1m) bald, fanged head with silvery-blue skin, incandescent white eyes and giant wings springing from his temples. He has a tongue of flickering lightning which can snake out up to 20m.

Greater Gift: Hragahl can transform a staff or weapon of the summoner's so that it has powers of a *Stormblade* [*WD39, Runeblades*].

Lesser Gifts: For one POW point he will summon up a Storm Demon and place it under the summoner's control for fifteeen minutes. For two points of POW he will give a 5% bonus in General Knowledge (to a maximum of 45%). For three POW he can increase a being's INT by one point or summon storms to confound an enemy.

Final Notes
A word of warning: campaigns where demon lords get summoned up every weekend and every other character has a Greater Gift are going to get dull very quickly. Scenarios could involve a demon lord's *influence* without requiring him to make a personal appearance – player characters could battle a small cult worshipping one of these entities, or inadvertantly break a chain of events set in motion by a demon lord long ago.

Bear in mind that even the Lesser Gifts of a demon lord are powerful and hard to come by. There is (or should be, if refereed properly) a high risk factor in any summoning, and the demon lord must have a favourable reaction to the summoner if any deal is to be struck. Few generals would care to swell their army's ranks with demon warriors, even if they can seek out one of the demonologists powerful enough to make such a bargain. Only three cases of military use of demonic powers are recorded in *Questworld's* history – each time by the extravagant, whimsical Ancients, for whom normal caution and logic seem meaningless.

Lastly, words of thanks to everyone who might have inspired or actively fed me with demonic ideas – in particular, Steve Ditko, Richard Lupoff, Miyamoto Musashi, Yvonne Newnham, Mike Polling, Jack Vance, Oliver Johnson and William Burroughs. Vance's short story *The Miracle Workers* directly supplied the idea of *possessions*, and gives a vivid account of their effects. For a host of further demons, Prof M A R Barker's *Book of Ebon Bindings* is recommended. It details, with many colourful anecdotes, creatures for Barker's *Petal Throne* game, but usable in any setting.□

Possession Table

Demon Invoked	*POW cost*	*Effects*
Akresh	12	+20% to Parry (to a minimum of 50%); +1 to armour points; CON rises to species maximum.
Eldyr	10	+20% to Oratory (minimum 35%); CHA rises to species maximum.
Engala	13	STR & CON rise to normal maximum x1½.
Hragahl	13	INT rises by 5 points (to an upper limit of species maximum.
Kesh	10	+10% Defence; DEX rises to species maximum +4.
Kojuro	11	+10% to Attack and Parry (minimum 50%); +1d3 melee damage.
Kyrax	14	+20% to Stealth and Perception (minimum 60%).
Sarasathsa	13	Immunity to spirit combat; effective +2 POW for *resisting* spells; +10% General Knowledge.
Tsienra	11	+20% to Attack (minimum 50%); +05% Defence; DEX rises to species maximum.
Umalu	14	70% chance of Chaotic feature, 30% chance of Reverse Chaos feature.

Two different *possessions* cannot be combined. *Possessed* characters are unaffected by *demoralize* or *fanaticism*. [*Possession* spells were detailed in part one of the series.]

Worldly Power

Additional Government Types for Traveller by Phil Masters

As anyone with a nodding acquaintance with political theory will be aware, the standard *Traveller* government determination system is rather simplistic and one dimensional. Nonetheless, the standard system works, despite a few peculiarities – why should only high-population worlds be lumbered with religious dictatorships? – and I'm not offering any functioning alternatives (yet). What *is* worth doing, however, is looking at a few variant government types, from both history and the pages of SF, and using them in *Traveller*, if only for the odd 'ref's special'.

For these purposes, a system of government has three important characteristics, each with a numerical value. The *Bureaucracy Level* (BL) is a measure of the extent to which government agencies intervene in day-to-day affairs, and is also the saving throw against officialdom taking an intrusive interest in characters' affairs. The *Law Modifier* (LM) is the DM applied (in place of the usual government number) to a random throw detemining the society's Law Level. The *Technological Modifier* (TM) is the DM applied to the random throw that determines a society's Tech Level.

Non-Technological Feudalism: Code N, BL 5, LM 7, TM -5. Probably the standard for many tech-1 worlds. Under Non-Technological Feudalism, areas of land are ruled by a small elite, almost certainly hereditary, and the population owes allegiance to the ruler of their area. The demands made by feudal lords on their subjects are for services or goods more often than they are for cash – indeed, cash may be quite rare, or even unknown. Central authority tends to be weak, as lords can always demand military service of their subjects and attack anyone trying to assert authority. Laws are determined by the area's ruler, and by agreements between such lords; thus, the main characteristic of such laws is that they defend the interests of the aristocracy, and favour the *status quo*. Because relationships centre on control and use of land, merchants and city dwellers are in an ambiguous, and often difficult, position. This is why this type of government is virtually unknown at tech levels beyond 3, except on a very few *highly* mechanised worlds, where industry can be left to the robots.

Although feudal worlds tend to be violent, the fear of peasant revolt tends to make their rulers restrictive about weaponry, except in 'proper' (ie loyal) hands. In particular, missile weaponry is often carefully controlled, as it can be too much of an equaliser between the wealthy, well-armed lord and the unloved peasant. This is related to a certain dislike of technological development generally.

Demarchy: Code R, BL 1, LM 1, TM +2. A variant form of participant democracy, with many of the traits of an anarchy. In fact, Demarchy may be the *only* form of participant democracy possible to some very populous, or geographically dispersed, cultures. Instead of the usual participant system of meetings in a particular place, a Demarchy uses the most sophisticated two-way communications media available to allow mass discussion and voting on almost every issue. Because of the speed and frequency of debates, the result is virtually mob rule, with skilled speakers and self-publicists given a considerable advantage. Such a system can only survive if bureaucrats and officials, who will always seek to centralise political power, are severely restrained, and this may only be possible if such individuals are generally held in very low esteem. A Demarchy can represent a very dangerous society for outsiders, and especially for those who oppose popular sentiment. Laws tend to be vague, but penalties for infringement may be heavy.

Example: The name and idea of a Demarchy seems to have been invented by SF writer Joan Vinge in her novel, *The Outcasts of Heaven Belt*. Although the mechanisms of the system have often been discussed in SF, I know of no other work which examines the subject so fully.

Technological Theocracy: Code T, BL 6, LM 4, TM +2. A rare and exotic system, Technological Theocracy is characterised by a rather simplistic division between rulers and ruled. The latter are deliberately kept in ignorance by the former, and the apparent tech level for much of the world involved is rarely more than 1 or 2. However, the aristocracy/priesthood has access to technology several levels beyond that of their subjects, and uses it to awe and cow the masses. Such rulers may assume the role of priests, granted miraculous power by the gods, or even of actual gods and demi-gods. If the aristocracy actually has commercial access to interstellar technology, so much the better for them. Although the rulers will keep a careful eye on the populous, they will tend to feel that they have little to fear, and so government/divine intervention will be limited – except when technological change is threatened.

Example: Although priests have, on occasion, used technical tricks to impress gullible worshippers, this form of government has never actually occured in human history. It is, however, quite commonly depicted in the pages of science fiction; Harry Harrison has used it more than once. The classic novels using the theme are Fritz Leiber's *Gather, Darkness!*, and – more or less definitively – Roger Zelazny's *Lord of Light*, which introduces the interesting twist that the pseudo-divinities are also master psionicists. Other Zelazny works are also relevant here, notably *Creatures of Light and Darkness*.

Abstract Supreme Authority: Code S, BL 8, LM 10, TM +1. A world governed by an Abstract Supreme Authority will generally appear to be Balkanized, although other structures might be visible instead. Actually, supreme power resides in the hands of a small, rather detached elite, who permit the more visible structure to persist as a convenient means of detailed minor administration. ration. Selection for the elite is subtle and discrete, usually based on the rulers' determination to maintain power. The elite take care to remain dispassionate; although they may enjoy their position, they claim – quite sincerely for the most part – that their detachment, experience, and intellectual ability allows them to enforce the genuine greatest good for the greatest number. They may have access to more sophisticated technology than the mass of the population.

Example: Despite all claims to the contrary, no government in human history has actually functioned as an Abstract Supreme Authority. Science Fiction writers have frequently toyed with similar ideas; there is a hint of such ideas in Larry Niven's Beowulf Shaeffer stories, and Ursula LeGuin's *Ekumen* is a highly relevant concept. It is also arguable that the *Traveller* Imperium represents exactly this sort of government. The classic example, however, is Cordwainer Smith's *Instrumentality*, which appears in nearly all of Smith's works, which are highly recommended.

Sample Scenarios Using Non-Standard Governments. Three scenarios are presented here, each centred on a world government of one of the types described in the first part of this article. Each is in the *76 Patrons* format, with patron, required skills (if any) for the job, and alternative backgrounds for the referee to choose or roll for.

1108: THE MASTER'S POLITICAL SURVEY MISSION RETURNED FROM ITS SELECTED INTERSTELLAR TOUR. CERTAIN EXTRACTS FROM THE EXPEDITION'S JOURNAL REVEAL SOME NEW POLITICAL SYSTEMS DISCOVERED ON THE SURVEY.

1 • SURVEY MISSION •• PATRON: INDUSTRIALIST, UPP 697BDA, AGE 51 •• REQUIRED SKILLS: MECHANICAL, ELECTRONIC

Referee's Notes: The offer of work comes from an accredited agent of a minor interstellar mining corporation. A small team is required to perform a quick but careful survey of the planet Noth (C7864R4-D), as there are reasons to believe that mineral wealth could be present there. Basic skills required to operate the survey equipment are Mechanical-1 and Electronic-1. Prospecting skill would also be of use. Expenses, middle passage, and Cr15,000 per head are offered to the party as all of the company's regular prospectors are otherwise engaged at present. The patron wants the work done quickly, before the rumour reaches any larger organizations; freelance professional surveyors are all too often paid by the 'big boys' to pass back news of interesting commissions from rivals.

Noth was inhabited by a small farming community that has grown fabulously rich on its automated farms' output of Nothi Cumin, a superb spice that will only grow successfully in the soil and solar radiation pattern of Noth. The farmers control their government by voting on all major issues, including criminal trials, via a video-conferencing system. If a debate occurs involving the party, the referee must assess the rhetorical skills applied, the mood of the populace, and any other relevant factors.

Base time to perform the survey is 30 days; -5 if any Prospecting skill is available, -1 per level of such skill over 1; +1d6 for each item of equipment subject to malicious damage.

1: All is straightforward. The party can obtain permission to perform a survey without much difficulty, and should be able to avoid infringing local customs with a modicum of tact and care.

2,3: The Nothian farmers are suspicious of any threat to their stable, self-indulgent society. Blanket permission to survey is not available; permission to survey specific areas must be obtained in the face of attitudes ranging from affable but businesslike neutrality to outright hostility.

4,5: As 2-3, but the general attitude is hostile, and 1d+1 acts of disruption (petty sabotage, assault, etc) will occur in the course of the mission.

6: As 4-5, but at least one of the farmers has been secretly bribed by an agent of one of the patron's rivals to disrupt events, and after 2d6 days, a group of young local thugs – similarly hired – will begin watching the party for a chance to cause trouble.

2 • HIGH LORDS •• PATRON: NOBLE, UPP 8599AC, AGE 40 •• REQUIRED SKILLS: NONE

Referee's Notes: The party is approached by a well-dressed man who explains that he represents the Council of Lords of the planet Molnarax. The non-human peasantry of that planet has always been contented and docile, but recently there have been insurrections and other difficulties. The Council suspects that some off-world interference is involved, and wants to hire a small group of tough individuals to locate and remove the troublemakers. Cr150,000 plus reasonable expenses are offered for the job.

Molnarax (D5444T2-A) has a population of humanoid primitives who are dominated by a small group of humans – the High Lords – who have set themselves up as deities. The natives are small (1-1¼m), slender beings (-2 on strength, +1 on dexterity, education 0), limited to tech level 0-1; the only weapons they possess are clubs, spears, and short bows. However, they produce remarkably fine jewellery and abstract artworks, which the High Lords sell off-planet at high prices. The world is way off the normal trade lanes; the nearest populated world is a jump-4 trip away, although there are systems with fuel-bearing gas giants nearer.

1: There is no outside interference. A small group of junior Molnaraxi nobles is seeking to bring down certain of their seniors, and has spread rumours of 'false gods' among the natives to cause disruption. Establishing and proving this is the party's problem.

2: The 'troublemaker' is a lone ex-scout who stumbled across Molnarax, and took a dislike to the political system. He is dwelling in a well-hidden cave in a mountain area, acting as a 'sage' to the natives (natives and animal encounters in the area must be determined by the referee). He has cloth armour and an automatic rifle.

3: The trouble comes from a far trader, whose captain managed to trace the source of certain valuable traded artworks. The crew have set themselves up as 'The *True* Gods', and are dwelling in a forest region.

4: As 3, but the trader has a small group of well-armed mercenaries along as a bodyguard.

5: The Imperial Secret Service, which regards the Molnarax situation as intolerable exploitation of primitives, has established a project to disrupt the High Lords' system and educate the natives. Their detachment on the planet, which includes a squad of marines, is small but well-equipped.

6: There is no outside intervention at all. The natives, who are quite intelligent and not particularly prone to superstition in the human sense, have begun to deduce the nature of their situation from a multitude of trivial clues. Being so intelligent, they may set some remarkably ingenious traps and ambushes for the party.

3 • TRADING PERMIT •• PATRON: MERCHANT, UPP 567896, AGE 47 •• REQUIRED SKILLS: ADMINISTRATION

Referee's Notes: A representative of an interstellar trading company offers the party work at Cr20,000 a head on a success-only basis. The job involves a planet named Vo, which is nominally a democracy, and usually regarded as a civil-service bureaucracy (planetary statistics C666889-8). The patron's company recently sought permission to establish a branch on Vo to trade high-tech machine tools for local products; the request was refused, for no apparent reason. Initial investigations have suggested that Vo is *really* run by an Abstract Supreme Authority; certainly, many members of the bureaucracy, at different levels, are members of a mysterious organization called 'The Blue Crystal Brotherhood'. The job on offer is to obtain the trading permit, if necessary by penetrating the Brotherhood; Cr2,500 to cover expenses, plus return tickets, high passage, to Vo, are available.

1,2: There has been an error of intelligence on the patron's part. The Blue Crystal Brotherhood is an innocent social club with a childish taste for secrecy; the permit was refused because the negotiators neglected to place bribes in the right places. Careful application of cash should facilitate the party's work, as and when they identify the problem.

3: The Blue Crystal Brotherhood certainly thinks of itself as ruling Vo, although its influence is partial at best. It is a quasi-religious body, with a complex policy partly dictated by a divination method resembling the tarot. This is what caused refusal of the permit application – the cards demanded that the move be blocked. The problem may be solved by either bribing or threatening senior members of the Brotherhood, or simply by working through non-members within the civil service (who regard the Brotherhood as a nuisance).

4: The Brotherhood is an old, devious body, whose greatest asset is an ancient (First Imperium) 'super-computer', programmed to optimise the running of Vo's economy. The trade application proved, when analysed by this machine, to imply a possible de-stabilising effect on the Voan system – local machine tool manufacturers would have difficulty adapting to such competition fast enough, and dependency on off-world supplies would make the Voan economy excessively vulnerable. This decision could be reversed, but only if the party can gain access to the innermost circles of the Brotherhood, and then negotiate from a position of strength. (The threat of reporting the existence of the computer to all and sundry might suffice).

5: As 4, but the computer is – unbeknownst to the Brotherhood – subtly controlled by agents of a neighbouring world's government, who have ensured that the long-term result of its advice will be to create a strong trade bond between the two planets, with Vo generally subservient.

6: The Blue Crystal Brotherhood is a powerful and very secretive organization; the *most* secret fact is that it is a Zhodani front. The long-term aim of the consulate's manipulation of Voan society is complex, but essentially involves preventing the development of unifying trade links in this subsector by the encouragement of social isolationism – hence the trade permit refusal. Extensive investigation of the organization may eventually lead to Zhodani intelligence network operating on the planet.

This issue sees the start of a new regular column for fantasy role-playing beginners, called Lew's Views *and written by Lew Pulispher. It will deal with advice, suggestions and tips for DMs.*

The Wizard's Library

Non-fiction Sources for Fantasy Role-Playing Ideas

Good fantasy role-playing GMs should always be looking for ideas of exotic societies, organizations, and cultures to add to their adventures, because the GM who relies wholly on commercial adventure modules can never give his players the full potential of FRP gaming. Legend and fiction can stimulate many ideas, though more often some part of legend or story is borrowed without alteration. But non-fiction can also contribute stimulating ideas for the fantasy world. History is the primary source, but archaeology, architecture, and simple word-play can be useful.

What's in a Name?

The Ever Victorious Army. The Cult of the White Lotus. The Immortals. The Red Eyebrows. Think about these names a moment, imagine what organization in a FRP world might bear the name... The names are all historical, but most readers probably recognized none of them, or only one. However, it is not necessary to know what the historical organization was, but to use picturesque names from unfamiliar (usually non-western) history as a stimulus to your imagination, to create entities which can be used in the fantasy world.

For example, although the Ever Victorious Army was the military arm of a nineteenth century Chinese rebellion, it isn't necessary to know the details. You must ask yourself, what might the EVA be in *my* world, regardless of what it was in China? In my campaign, for example, it is a famous mercenary group which can never be completely destroyed, thanks to a secret, widespread reserve structure.

The Cult of the White Lotus was a secret society which proclaimed the appearance of an 'Enlightened One' in the years preceding the end of Mongol rule in China. But *your* Cult may be a ring of drug smugglers, a fifth column for neighbouring nations bent on conquest, or even a group of magicians with peculiar tastes. If you keep a list of such picturesque names in a notebook, and look at it occasionally, sooner or later you'll think of something interesting to fit some of them. If you're like most people, your imagination needs a reference point to work from. The names provide the references.

Some reading in ancient and eastern history, especially Chinese and Indian but also Persian (the Immortals), Islamic, and south Asian, will supply you with names. Start with encyclopaedias (especially *Brittanica*) or popular histories; historical atlases and outlines of world history are also good. If you enjoy historical reading you can delve into scholarly work more likely to refer to obscure groups. Actually, we tend to use European history in this way without thinking about it, with the drawback that too many players recognize the names. This leads to a second method of acquiring interesting entities from history for fantasy worlds.

In this case, you adopt 75-90% of an historical organization's characteristics while changing the name. There are two reasons for the latter. First, a player might recognize the name, no matter how obscure, look up the real thing, and thereby gain an unfair or unrealistic advantage. Second, well-known historical names intrude on the fantasy atmosphere of the imaginary world. I cringe when someone says his character is Japanese or French, or any other historical 'race'. Similarly, the use of familiar historical names of organizations can destroy the illusion of reality by reminding you of the real world.

For example, you might wish to adopt the pre-Alexandrian Persian Empire as a model for a major part of your world. This produces some interesting possibilities for scenarios, such as oppportunities for intrigue in the semi-autonomous satrapies, and rebellions against the emperor. It provides a structure for an empire which can resist almost any outside attack, but which can do little to interfere with affairs outside the empire – except with bribes and subsidies. The more you learn about this empire, the more interesting it can be.

But don't call it the Persian Empire, and so be sure to vary the details enough that a player cannot gain much from his knowledge if he recognizes the historical model.

Similarly, such famous historical edifices as the Great Wall of China, Hadrian's Wall, and Offa's Dyke can be introduced into your world. Or at the other end of the spectrum, you might ponder the Chinese emperor who was buried with an army of 6,000 life-size soldiers and horses, sculpted of terra cotta. Facets of Roman or Greek government might also be adopted.

Note that you can also plunder science fiction in this manner. Although most aspects of an SF (as opposed to fantasy) story are not adaptable to a fantasy world, races and their cultures can be used without modification. Think about the pre-space flight Merseian culture described in Poul Anderson's tales of the Polesotechnic League. Try putting some Merseians on a large island somewhere in your world. Few GMs are able to manufacture entire 'new' societies; borrowing from history or science fiction is often the only practical means of introducing variation into the cultures of your world.

Archaeology and Architecture

Primitive tribes, or at least those which are close to nature, exist in most fantasy worlds. There is no reason why all should be based on traditions about elves or American Indians. A little reading in archaeology and anthropology will show you a broader range of activities and cultures which might be useful. How did the Hottentots, the Zulus, or the Yanamomo of South America live? An archaeology text may include diagrams of primitive dwellings, villages, even fortresses.

Architecture, of course, supplies diagrams of less primitive structures: temples, monasteries, cathedrals, castles, palaces. The text describing such buildings can stimulate useful trains of thought. In either case, a city or university library should have books containing many diagrams, though a good encyclopaedia is the place to start.

Word-Play

Combinations of adjectives and nouns, or nouns and nouns, can create names for races, cults, or what have you. Think of some promising nouns, say 'dancers', 'seekers', 'riders', 'sky', 'star', 'wave', and combine some. [Note that generally you'll want to combine a standard noun with a noun derived from a verb, such as the first three above.] So who are the skyseekers, the wavedancers, the star-riders? Not all combinations will work – I don't see much hope for star-riders in a fantasy game, for example – but some will sound interesting. For example, the skyseekers might be a brotherhood of magicians who seek a permanent *flying* spell, or a means to travel to one of the moons. The wavedancers might be a frivolous but intelligent aquatic race who communicate through intricate swimming routines. Keep adding to your word lists, and combine the words in new ways; if even one in ten is good you'll be ahead in the game, and in your campaign.□

Dear *WD*,

For some time, I have been vaguely disatisfied with the *D&D* alignment system, but now I realise why. *D&D* tries to construct a pseudo - medieval milieu, but it does not take into account the changes in attitudes since then. The inquisitors, who tortured and burned heretics, would have thought themselves Lawful Good, while we might regard them as Lawful Evil. If the alignment system is not based upon their moral beliefs then from whose beliefs is it derived? The answer seems to be that Gary Gygax is the source.

Some people might be prepared for Gary Gygax to decide for them what is right and what is wrong, but I am not, especially when apparently, good people are good because they like cutting evil creatures into little bits and evil creatures spread havoc for the sake of evil itself. The latter is especially naive; even Hitler thought he was doing good, while criminals commit evil deeds in self-interest. On reflection, the alignment system and the inquisitors are, in fact, not too far removed.

The alignment system is indicative of *TSR*. They seem to believe that everyone should think the way they think. The *D&D* rule system, despite being ill thought-out and illogical, is treated as holy writ: *D&D* supposedly should be played to the letter of the rules, without question. You may have noticed how Don Turnbull, in this letters' page, and Gary Gygax, in his interview in *WD14*, have been so dismissive of other people making changes in their sacred rules.

I think *D&D* is a good game, in spite of its flaws; it's just that others are better, despite what *TSR* think. All role-playing games owe an immense debt to *D&D* for establishing the hobby, but I think this debt has been paid; *D&D* has been the most popular game for many years. Isn't it time for players, who take RPGs seriously, to abandon *D&D* for newer, better systems.

Yours,
Edmund Hopkins, London.

Dear *WD*,

Recent letters suggest that magic-use in war in a *D&D* world would bring Divine Intervention. I think that this is incorrect for two reasons.

First, magic is as natural a part of the *D&D* world as air. Many creatures and humans have the ability to use it and do so daily. In war all abilities are used to achieve victory and a wizard will use his magic just as a Lord will use his armies. Discriminating against magic in combat is just refuting the realities of the fantasy world.

The second is that Divine Intervention is a very rare occurrence, especially in large battles. Such battles are watched over by the gods on both sides, and any aid sent by one side will be prevented from arriving, or will be balanced by equal aid from the other side. If a battle is of such importance that a god comes down personally, he will be met almost immediately by an opposing god. Thus is the balance of power between the alignments maintained.

Finally a suggestion for new monsters – the neutral and good alignments need powerful creatures similar in function to the demons, devils and demons of the evil alignments. Coatl, ki-rin and the good dragons are being overworked and request angelic aid. The neutral gods are devoid of any aligned servitors and would like to have a rest occasionally.

Yours,
Thomas O'Reill, Ireland.

Dear *WD*,

It seems to me, as it probably does to many other *White Dwarf* readers, that *AD&D* Chaotic Goods get an unfairly raw deal in comparison with Lawful Goods towards which there is a general bias.

There is a general belief that Lawful Good is goodness in its purest form and Chaotic Good is an impure form of goodness – a goodness soiled by other beliefs. Anyone who bothers to read the sections on alignment in the *DM's Guide* and *Players Handbook* will find that this is obviously not the case. Chaos and Law are merely forms in which the goodness of a character, monster, etc is revealed. Likewise Chaotic Evil is seen to be the vilest form of evil; it is seen to be an extreme with the other extreme being Lawful Good – again this is not the case.

This bias is evidenced in the special treatment given to Lawful Goods. They are given their own character class – the paladin (what about a Chaotic Good 'Freedom Fighter'?) the only good monster of lesser status in the *Monster Manual* is Lawful Good – Bahamut; they are given their own magic items – the *Holy Avenger*, the *Scourge of the Heavens in WD35* and there is five times as much chance of a sword being aligned to Lawful Good than there is of it being aligned to Chaotic Good.

I hope this inbalance will be corrected in the *AD&D* expansion volumes due out soon. If not, I shall certainly try to make amends in my own campaign at least.

Yours,
Alan M Stacey, Mount Olympus.

Dear *WD*,

I really must protest, in the strongest possible terms, at the appalling cover of issue 44. When are we going to see the end of these chainmail bikinis, for heaven's sake? Not only are they sexist, they are *dumb*. No female adventurer with an ounce of brains would go monster-chasing in that kind of outfit; she will wear the best armour that money can buy, or at least enough clothes to keep out the cold!

Griselda's reaction has been characteristically vigorous. She says it's ridiculous the way artists draw such characters as if they are about to go on for the floor-show of some hot joint; if the practice continues, she may be dropping round to see some of these artists one time, and it won't just be to ruffle their hair.

Seriously, isn't it about time *White Dwarf* gave a lead in discouraging this kind of illustration – still far too common, eg on the cover of Elizabeth Lynn's superb *The Northern Girl in Hamlyn* paperbacks? Do your readers really like to imagine female adventurers in this manner? For good measure, Conan-style barbarians are equally dumb, with nothing between them and damage and the hair on their chests; in their own way, I suspect they're sexist too.

Yours,
Oliver Dickinson, York.

Dear *WD*,

It has been some time since the great adventuring sage Irriti Arata discovered the existence of Golems and brought them to my attention (*WD44 RuneRites*). Recent delving has brought to light some interesting facts about their creation and control which I present here.

1. It seems that the Flesh Golems originally encountered were but one kind and, that whilst less common, Golems made from metal and rock also exist. They have 8 and 6 point skin respectively but those made from rock or clay seem to have no protection from maces and other smashing weapons which crack them mercilessly.

2. A plaque recently taken from a temple of Chaos makes it clear that Golem creation is a long and often unfruitful process. Preparation, it would seem, takes an entire season and the chance of success for a single priest working alone is only 40%, multiple priests and the use of craftsmen/surgeons can increase this to 80%.

3. Golems exist only to serve their God, they will usually follow the commands of their temples priests but are not bound to do so. They will never follow the orders of a non-chaotic.

4. They take no interest in personal treasure but have been known to loot their victims for their temple.

5. Golems have never been known to speak but seem to understand most languages.

I hope these few small points help to add a bit of colour to the morbid cheeks of the Golem.

May all your troubles be trollkin shaped.
Simon Basham, E Sussex.

Dear *WD*,

Keep up the good work on *WD* – so far I have been very disappointed with the standard of your only UK competitor, *Imagine*. The only advantage they have over you is in the postal games hobby field – perhaps you could do something for them in the same way as you have with computer addicts.

Yours,
Graham Staplehurst, Dover.

IRILIAN

A Complete AD&D City by Daniel Collerton
Part 5: Zotaquaan Aef Tor Wysard

This is the fifth in a series of six articles describing a small AD&D *town – Irilian – and providing a sequential scenario –* The Rising of the Dark. *The first four episodes reached the point where a major relic for use against the Dark was discovered to be a fake produced by Zotaquaan Aef Tor Wysard. This episode describes the last quarter and the penultimate section of* The Rising of the Dark, *which starts where Part 4 left off. DMs should read it carefully before deciding whether the party might need aid from outside sources. Care should be taken to keep the party on vaguely the right track and prevent them wandering aimlessly over Irilian; a 'suggestion' from the Abbeie or Monasterion should correct any mistaken ideas. Part 1* [WD42] *features a glossary and the nomenclature key.*

The Tor Wysard. Before leaving the Monasterion, the Gran Mareschal will insist that a Brothor Aef Lagu, the Seneschal Ras, [see *WD45*] accompany the party to keep an eye on them. Ras, who has his own suspicions about the Sceptre, will generally not interfere unless there is a very good reason for doing so.

The party can reach the base of the Tor Wysard [see Tower description] and start to climb without incident provided precautions are taken against being recognized. Otherwise, the chance of being spotted by the Mob is as in Part 4. The wind, already gusting strongly at ground level, will increase as the party goes higher. Twenty feet from the top, it will reach hurricane force; each character must roll under their average of strength and dexterity on a d20 or be blown off to strike the ground for 8d6 damage. If the party are roped together, those either side of a falling character add two to their roll. The sides are too hard to take pitons or other fasteners but a character reaching the top may loop a rope around a pinnacle. A *spider climb* will prevent the recipient from being blown off. On reaching the top, the storm will intensify, lightning continually striking the Tor's pinnacles; any character raising a metal object above the 5' pinnacles has a 50% chance/round of being struck for 6d8 damage (save vs lightning for half damage). As the party *teleports* down to Zotaquaan, the beacons flare on the Mona and Grimmr Tors and the dissonant sounds of their alarm bells become faintly audible in the screaming gale.

The party will arrive in the Summoning Hall with a thunder-clap of displaced air. Zotaquaan is seated on his throne. He has silver hair and golden eyes. A scarlet jewel blazes from his forehead and a shifting radiance falls from his cabbilistic robes. At his left hand is a demon and at his right, a devil. A golem stands behind, and a sable-eyed cat gazes from his lap. In his hand is a wand and on his fingers, rings. A *force wall* shimmers before him. He waits, silent; unmoving and unmoved until the party explains. Then he will chuckle and stand.

'I am truly sorry that you have had to suffer such inconveniences. I apologise especially to you Ras, although for reasons which I cannot explain, I am not entirely to blame. (Ras will keep his own counsel). Do you not find it amusing that the Brothors Aef Lagu, such fine upholders of *The Law*, should guard a fake relic? No? Well, perhaps not. Still allow me to make some small reparation; perhaps I can gain some information to help you.'

Cancelling his force protection, Zotaquaan will join the party and, while his infernal servants hand round refreshments, attempt a *contact other plane* spell; trying to reach one of the higher Planes. He will fail as the upper Planes have been closed by some power which he cannot break. Whilst preparing for another attempt, it will occur to him to ask the party if they have ever wondered why they have been allowed to get so far. If the Dark is so powerful, why has it not destroyed them? Is it playing with them or is something protecting them? Is it something perhaps about Irilian itself? Are they sure that everything is as it seems.?

On his second attempt, he will succeed in reaching one of the lower Planes. He will stiffen then relax, blackness starting to pour from his eyes, ears, nose and mouth as he whispers, 'It comes. Leave.'

However, before this is possible, the dark, still pouring out, will cover his body and the floor and start to climb up the walls, making it impossible to find the teleportation controls. As it spreads, the room will darken and cool until, in two rounds, it is well below zero. From then on, characters will take one point of damage per turn from the cold. One round after its appearance, the dark will reach the devil and demon, releasing them from Zotaquaan's control. They will then try to destroy him. The golem, Ras and the cat will try and prevent this.

After five rounds (or sooner if it appears that he will be killed), Zotaquaan will abruptly sit up, apparently none the worse, cast a *protection from evil 10ft radius* to keep off the attackers, then destroy them. He will then say to the party,

'Seek for the source of the liquid of life;
Delve in the dark for the secret of light.'

Then he will mutter, 'Needless obscurantic doggeral as usual', and lose consciousness.

The golem and the cat will prevent the party examining Zotaquaan's body and intimate that they leave; the cat *polymorphing* then activating the teleport. The dark, having vanished with Zotaquaan's recovery, will reappear on his collapse, giving the party one round to *teleport* away. Any characters remaining after that will become covered with Blaec Fyr, no saving throw. Zotaquaan will be obscured as the dark envelops his circle of protection.

Conditions on the top of the Tor will be as when the party left with the same chances of being blown off etc. To the west, the city walls

are covered in a black mist through which the tower beacons dimly glow. As they watch, these will go out. Above the wind, they will hear the distant sound of battle – suddenly cut off. Down below, the Munuc Geard is seething with a crowd of frightened Irilians. Descending to the tower base and into the screaming, swearing crowds, they will be spotted by the Mob.

After a round of surprise, 10d10 will give chase (all statistics as normal Irilians but +20% on morale due to anger); sections splitting off to prevent the party moving north or east; channelling them through the streets crowded with weeping children and frightened men and women, towards the Megngaet. Behind the Mob the Tor Wysard will burst into Blaec Fyr. At the Megngaet, more of the Mob, approaching from other directions, will make it imperative that the party seek refuge. Just before the Mob arrives, the door of the Gnome Juel Aef will open and Erea Gasrintri [Part 4] will beckon the party inside.

Gnome Juel Aef. The Mob will group outside before attempting to storm the building using timbers from nearby buildings as battering rams. Inside the Gnome to assist in its defence will be Erea and her husband, 13 staff (all normal Irilians) and Djhela of the Psionic Fellowship. These will be able to hold the windows and doors for five rounds until the Mob breaks through by sheer force of numbers. Djhela will use her psionic powers at the last possible moment but when she does so, the Irilians' fear of psionics is such that the Mob will have to make an immediate morale check at -50% and further checks every round, also at -50%. In any event, it will only continue the attack for another two turns before the approaching mist scares it off.

Once the Mob retreats, Djhela will enquire what the party's business is; using her *ESP* to confirm what they say. If the party has not already solved the riddle left to them by Zotaquaan, Djhela will remark that when drinking from the Rubis Weg well she received a vision of blinding light from her *Sensitivity to Psychic Impressions*. Perhaps 'the liquid of life' is water and its 'source' the well?

Back on the Streets. If the party moves up Rubis Weg, two Ridan of the Garde with the Commandere Aef Hors (Isrim Deorsunnu) will gallop out of the wall of black mist which blocks Rubis Weg from the San Hael eastwards; the Irilian Scouts following closely behind. Catching sight of the party, they will rein in and explain that the mist started to move towards Irilian at first light, first overwhelming the Graefgeard, although the Chantrman escaped, and crossing the walls an hour or so later. Since Lelfos had not enough men to defend the walls (the militia having failed to materialise), he decided to fight a delaying action; withdrawing to the Mark Geard for a final stand. Unfortunately, the foot soldiers' morale failed as the Dark approached; leaving the Scouts and Orcridan to face it alone. Lelfos disappeared about the same time. Isrim then withdrew his troops, forming them up behind the walls before charging as the Dark crossed them. Inside the mist were large numbers of humanoids of all types,– orcs, goblins, bugbears, flinds and norkers. Half of the Orcridan did not return.

If the party in turn explain their situation and appear to need it, Isrim will detail Anhalas, Elas and Kirea of the Scouts [Part 4] to assists before wheeling his remaining forces and charging again down Rubis Weg. From the time that Isrim leaves till the Dark arrives, the party will have two turns.

The Rubis Weg Well. 100ft deep with 15ft of water, its walls are smooth and covered with slimy moss making it virtually impossible to climb (-70% to normal chances). A character able to inspect the well sides, who rolls under intelligence on a d20 will notice that a square area about 50ft down has moss of a slightly different colour to the rest. Infravision will reveal the area to be slightly warmer than the rest of the walls. Anyone tapping the walls will automatically discover that the area rings hollow. (Characters without rope may gather 100ft in 3 rounds from nearby houses.)

Characters falling into the well will suffer 1 point damage for every 10ft fallen and must make a system shock roll to escape being stunned on impact with the water. Normal *DMG* drowning rules should be used for characters in the water.

The moss may be cleaned off in one round to reveal a seven foot square of white marble with a golden *Rune of Warding* carved into it. This may be removed by a character of good alignment or any character using a *knock* spell. In the latter case, the slab will topple outwards, catching the caster if he or she is on or below that level for 4d10 damage and, in addition, 50% of the time, breaking any rope used. Since the slab fits neatly into the 9ft diameter of the well, it is impossible to dodge. Good characters need merely to ask the slab to open. It will glow briefly then disappear. However it is opened, behind it, a long square featureless passage shrinks to a point of light.

Meanwhile, one round before the mist wall reaches the well head, Isrim will gallop out of it with his remaining men – three of the Orcridan and the Scouts, all plainly terrified – and disappear towards the Mark Geard. The mist will silently wash over the party and pour down the well. Inside it all is silent but for the crackle of the Blaec Fyr which is spreading amongst the buildings. Visibility varies between ten and twenty feet. One round after this, 10 orc Children of the Dark [*MM* and see later] AC 6, HD 1, Move: 9", No of Attacks: 1, Damage: 8, Special Attacks: Possession by the Dark, HP (Dark [Body]) 5x6[4], 3x4[3], 2x3[3] will quietly appear and attack. In three rounds, these will be joined by 10 goblin Dark Children [*MM* and see later] AC 6, HD1-1, Move: 6", No of Attacks: 1, Damage: 1d6, Special Attacks: Possession by the Dark, HP 6x4[4], 3x4[3], 2[2] with a further 10 arriving on each subsequent round. The Children will not follow characters out of the mist nor down the well.

Children of the Dark. Those who come into contact with the Dark often end up as Its Children, either through outright possession or, more usually, through attacks by other Children. The Children of the Dark move, fight, save and so forth just as normal but, since they are effectively automata, they cannot use spells or other magic or take spontaneous actions. Damage done by them does not physically harm their victims but weakens them; if the damage done equals or exceeds a being's hit points, that being becomes a Child of the Dark. Any sentient being may become a Child of the Dark, indistinguishable from normal but for its misty-teared black eyes.

Damage inflicted upon a Child of the Dark by normal weapons counts against the Child's pre-possession hit points. If these reach zero, the Child is killed. Magical damage, including that done by magical weapons, is only counted against the possessing Dark's hit points which are initially equal to the being's normal pre-possession hit points. If these become zero, the occupying Dark is dispersed; the being's displaced spirit or soul returning. Beings may be re-possessed.

Background Information

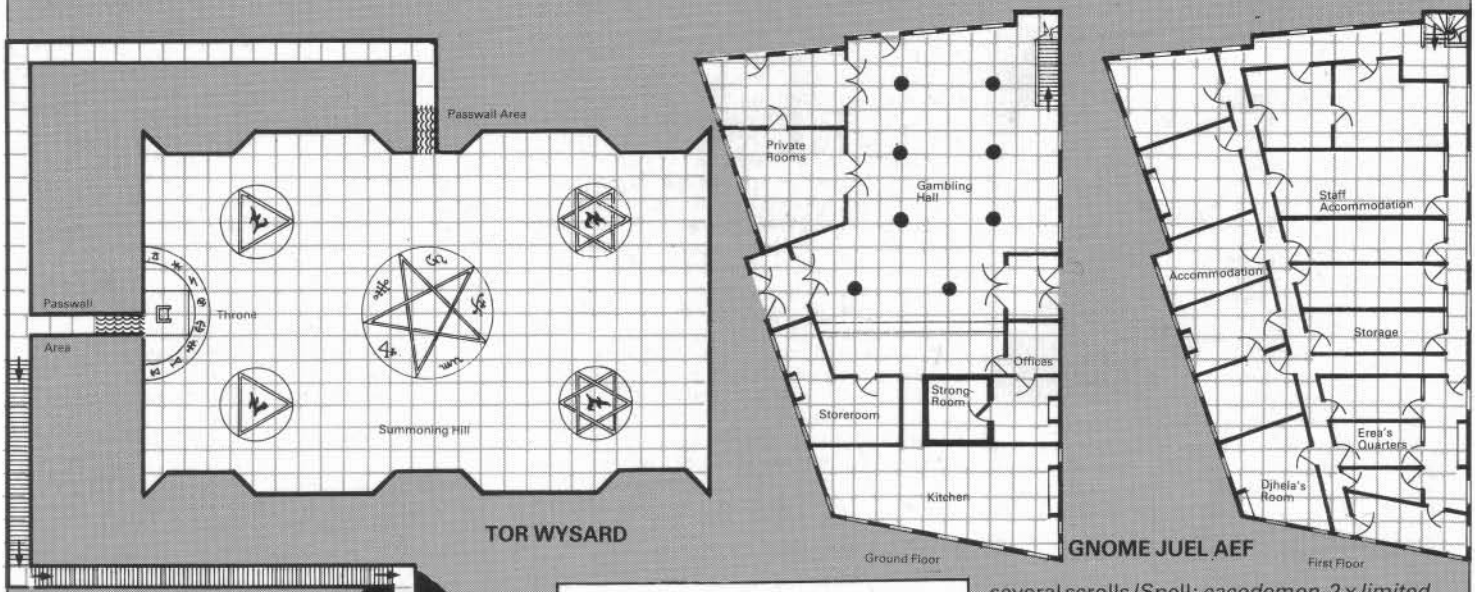
Gates/Towers (See Part 2 for further details.)

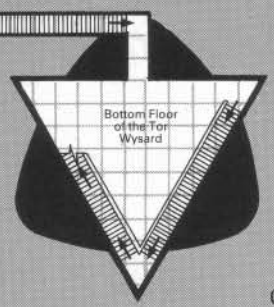
Megngaet. Towers 40 DPV each, Drawbridge 8 DPV, Portcullis 12 DPV, Gates 15 DPV, 2 Ballistae on each tower, Towers 20x20x40ft, Gate 20x30ft, Towers 3 storeys and a cellar each. Occupied by: Left tower, Garde Commandere, Stormwealcan Commandere, 1st Irnan of the Stormwealcan. Right tower: 2nd & 3rd Irnan of the Stormwealcan. Irilian's main gate is chiefly memorable for the thousands of magnificent gems which appear to encrust its upper surface. Unfortunately, close inspection will reveal coloured glass with large bare areas where easily reached fakes have been removed. However, from far enough away, the gate looks very fine with the setting sun striking blazes of light from the stones and it is still a favourite spot for Irilians to come and dream of better times. The drawbridge covers a pit filled with spikes (1d6+1d8 damage) which every so often claims an unwary drunk at night. The bridge across the moat, although stronger than the Blaecgaet's to support the greater traffic, can still be destroyed in two turns if the need arises. When open, 1 Irnan will be on duty. In all other respects the Megngaet resembles the Gealgagaet [Part 2].

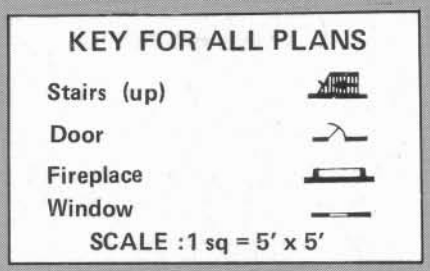
Sanguin Tor. 35 DPV, 1 Ballista, 20x20x30ft, 2 storeys. Occupied by the 1st Irnan of the Hliehhanman.

Grimmr Tor. 45 DPV, 2 Ballistae, 20x20x30ft, 2 storeys and cellar. Occupied by Irilian Scouts.

The Tor Wysard. 13 Munuc Geard (H7), ST 12, N1-N12 1, CN AV, 100 DPV. A towering spike of glassy green rock, the Tor Wysard appeared in Irilian just over a century ago along with its occupant, Zotaquaan Aef Tor Wysard. Its outer surface is clear of decoration but for an unprotected stair which winds its spell-lit way up the tower, passing as needed through passages bored into the supporting buttresses. At the tower's apex, these buttresses peel away to form three five foot pinnacles. The smooth roof of the tower has inscibed into it a pentacle surrounded by the message in common. 'To enter; stand inside the pentacle and state your business.' The pentacle is one terminal of a *teleport*; the other being in Zotaquaan's summoning room. Permanent variations of the *clairvoyance* and *clairaudience* spells focused onto the tower top allow Zotaquaan to check who is calling before activating the teleports. The controls are located on Zotaquaan's throne; when activated, the contents of the two pentacles are▷







exchanged.

The Summoning Room, again of featureless green stone, is located well below the Tor itself; access being gained through the use of *passwall* spells. Its roof, fifty feet above, is supported by massive buttresses; golden pentacles, circles of conjuration and wards are inlaid into the black floor; smoking braziers, guttering candles and strangely shaped and inscribed instruments litter the whole area. Lighting is from *continual light* spells on the roof. At the end, a strongly-warded dais supports a plain stone throne. The walls between buttresses are covered with dull black cloth embroidered in white with cabbalistic signs. Behind each, a *symbol* has been cast upon the wall. Working clockwise from the throne, these are of *stunning, pain, death, fear* and *sleep*.

Zotaquaan uses his throne when expecting or entertaining visitors and as a refuge should a summoning go amiss since it is the focus of some of his more useful enchantments. The spell surveillance of the Tor's roof operates from the throne, as does the *teleport* (if Zotaquaan is going out himself, he has his familiar activate it) and the release for the curtains covering the *symbols*. The throne's most useful feature, though, is its ability to act as the fifth side of a *Cube of Force* [*DMG*] except that it has 100 charges, does not recharge and covers the area shown on the plan rather than a 10ft cube.

Kept in the Summoning Room are two of Zotaquaan's bound spirits – Nguthzg, a Type I Demon [*MM*] AC 0, HD 8, Move: 12"/18", No of Attacks: 5, Damage: 2x1d4/2x1d8/1d6, Special Defences: See *MM*, Magic Resistance: 50%, HP 37, and Gereth, a Barbed Devil [*MM*] AC 0, HD 8, Move: 12", No of Attacks: 3, Damage: 2x1d8/3d4, Special Attacks & Defences: See *MM*, Magic Resistance: 35%, HP 42, and an Iron Golem [*MM*] AC 3, HD 18, Move: 6", No of Attacks: 1, Damage: 4d10, Special Attacks: Gas, Special Defences: +3 or better weapons to hit, Immune to all magic but electrical. HP 80. The spirits' enmity for each other is only exceeded by their hatred of Zotaquaan. In fact Zotaquaan would be glad to get rid of them but their terms of binding stipulated release after 10 years and 9 days and to break them would allow them to attack him. The golem is further protection for Zotaquaan should a summoning go wrong.

Only the upper eight storeys of the Tor Wysard are above ground level. These house Zotaquaan's living quarters and a library; five floors of books, scrolls, maps, globes, pictures in all conceivable languages and materials, worth in total several million silver pieces and covering a vast area of knowledge with special emphasis on magic and magical research. Collectively, these form a superb reference library but their chaotic organization means that, until properly catalogued, a process which would require several years, they are useless to anyone but Zotaquaan. In the library, mostly buried under piles of relatively worthless material and protected by *firetrap* spells, are Zotaquaan's master spell books. In addition to all of the generally known spells, these contain many variations on existing spells and new spells developed by Zotaquaan himself. Amongst these latter are the *create false relic* spell [Part 4]. The library is protected by a Guardian Daemon [*FF*] AC 1, HD 8, Move: 9, No of Attacks: 3, Damage: 1d6/3x1d12, Special Defences: Immune to *sleep, charm, hold, polymorph* and *fear*, +2 or better weapons to hit, Immune to all swords, Magic Resistance: 50%, HP 51, who does not have the ability to breath fire since that could prove damaging to the library's contents. The Daemon is instructed to attack anyone who enters the library except for Zotaquaan or anyone introduced by Zotaquaan. The uppermost three storeys of the Tor hold Zotaquaan's living areas.

The three underground floors form Zotaquaan's laboratory; a chaotic series of rooms cluttered with alchemical apparatus, experimental animal pens, half-completed experiments, various bits and pieces of magic and stores of all types of possible spell components; several hundreds of thousands of silver pieces worth all told. Genuine and failed magic items are all mixed together; only Zotaquaan knowing what is what. The failed items are: a *-2 Broadsword; a Wand of Cold* which envelops its user as an *icestorm*; a poisonous *Potion of Climbing*; a delusionary *Potion of Invulnerability* and a *Potion of Diminution* which shrinks its user to one fiftieth of normal size until a *wish* is used to reverse the effect. The correctly functioning items are: a suit of *+2 Plate Armour*, bits of which are scattered all over the laboratory, requiring a weeks search to locate them all; several scrolls (Spell: *cacodemon*, 2 x *limited wish, power sword stun, clone, monster summoning VI, permanency, polymorph any object, gate, shape change, wish, protection: elementals, magic*) and a wide range of powdered potions (4 x *Extrahealing, Fire Resistance, Storm Giant Strength*, 5 x *Healing, Levitation*, 2 x *Poison*) which need to be reconstituted with half a pint of water each before being taken but are otherwise as normal; a *Crystal Ball* and a *Helm of Comprehending Languages and Magic* [all *DMG*] in the form of a burning red gem mounted upon a slim silver fillet. Zotaquaan usually carries the remainder of his magic around with him and those are shown under his statistics.

Zotaquaan Aef Tor Wysard: RA H, SX M, AL N, CL MU, LV 17, HP 45, AC -2, AG 129, WE 203678, BL 10000, ST 8, IN 19, WI 17, DE 18, CO 9, CH 17, MI *Wand of Fire* (36 charges), *Bracers of Defence AC 2, Robe of Scintillating Colours, Ring of Regeneration, Ring of Elemental Command* (Earth), *+3 Dagger*, WN Wand.
Spells: 1st: *charm person, hold portal, identify, shield, sleep*. 2nd: *detect evil, ESP, locate object, stinking cloud, web*. 3rd: *dispel magic, haste, lightning bolt, protection from evil 10' radius, protection from normal missiles*. 4th: *confusion, fear, ice storm, minor globe of invulnerability, remove curse*. 5th: *cloudkill, conjure elemental*, 2 x *contact other plane, hold monster*. 6th: *disintegrate, legend lore, spiritwrack*. 7th: *cacodemon, limited wish, power word stun*. 8th: *antipathy, mind blank*. Zotaquaan also has limited psionic powers. Ability 137, Attack/Defence Modes ADE/HIJ, Disciplines: *Detection of Evil, Domination, Precognition; Energy Control*.

The most brilliant sorcerer of his time, Zotaquaan has retired from active adventuring to devote himself to his only true love – research. His knowledge of all types of general incantations is phenomenal and his special study of summonings and development of new rituals of summoning, binding and banishment have made him the undisputed authority in that area of magic. His frequent dealings with the inhabitants of the other Planes have not, however, curbed his naturally irreverent personality although they have served to increase his arrogance. Despite this, his general good humour keeps him a popular figure in Irilian.

Zotaquaan's familiar, Fylin, is similar to the normal Guardian Familiar [*FF*] except that it has freedom of movement, is exceptionally intelligent and can *polymorph* itself at will into a human form. AC 8 and better, HD 1 and better, Move: 12" and better, No of Attacks: 3, Damage: 2x1d4/1d6 and better, Special Defences: Rebirth, Magic Resistance: 85%, HP 6 and better. (The DM should decide exactly what Zotaquaan's new spells and variations are. A good source is new spells from previous *WDs*.)

I4 The Gnome Juel Aef. 9 Riht Diament Rad (E8), ST 2, N1 8, N2 16, CN PO, BC 4, CM 2, NC 6d4/5d5/10d4/10d6, NS 10, RC 1. Owned by Erea Gasrintri [Part 4], the Gnome Juel Aef is primarily a gambling house; having only limited accommodation: private rooms for eight and a common room for another ten. Most of its ground floor is taken over with the gambling halls; a large pillared area decorated with faded plum plush and peeling gilt stucco and two smaller, more secluded rooms. A variety of entertainments are on offer, ranging from simple card and dice games up to boardgames such as Orcfeoht or Aelfgam. The games are crooked but not obviously so; the degree varies with the amount the gambler could possibly win if successful and averages a 15% house edge. The cash float is 2000gp; reserves of a further 4000gp are on deposit with Disrim the banker [Part 2]. The bouncers are:

NAME	RA	SX	AL	CL	LV	HP	AC	AG	WE	BL	ST	IN	WI	DE	CO	CH	WN
Ugilin	½0	M	NE	F	3	21	5	18	534	50	16 (+0/+1)	12	9	12	14	7	Shortsword
Kuldug	½0	M	LN	F	4	24	5	21	1108	120	15	13	11	13	13	9	Mace
MI *+1 Mace*																	
Zigfa	½0	F	N	F	5	35	5	24	2473	140	17 (+1/+1)	9	4	11	18	6	Shortsword
MI *Potions of Extrahealing, Human Control*																	

Common customers at the Gnome are: Erea Gasrintri (30), Tirouv Polarion (10), Lelfos Gefacleofian (5), 2d4 of the Scouts (30), Commandere Aef Hors (5), Stormwealcan Commandere (5), Blodmarchant Commandere (5), Gisiral of the Gild Aef Ventners (15), 1d4 of the Gealgagang (20), Djhela of the Psionic Fellowship (20), 2d8 of the Garde (100). The only person of note presently staying at the Gnome is Djhela of the Psionic Fellowship posing as a trader in exotic furs.

The Gnome has lately been suffering a run of bad luck; several weeks ago, it lost almost 12000gp in one night to a group of visiting gamblers; mysterious fires have been breaking out and on two occasions in the last season, it has been attacked by the Mob. Consequently custom has fallen rapidly; bringing Erea to the verge of bankruptcy. Simultaneously, a series of prospective buyers have appeared, apparently motivated by a wish to 'help' Erea over her difficulties by buying a 51% share in the business. Erea is convinced that there is a single agent behind the Gnome's difficulties but has no inkling that it is Pelos Irilsdohtor [Part 4].

I5 The Stormridan. 1 Luft Mathkr Laen (C7), ST 3, N1 8, N2 12, N3 10, CN AV, BC 0.1, CM 3, NC 4d8/4d6/4d10/4d8, NS 15, RC 0.1. The Stormridan is Irilian's sole high class inn. The food and wine are excellent, the beds soft and the sheets changed every second season – even the fleas seem less voracious than elsewhere. Being a swish sort of place, it has only one bouncer, Efiran Sweordman, a peaceable fellow who will, if possible, reason with trouble-makers rather than lay hands upon them. RA H, SX M, AL NG, CL F, LV 3, HP 18, AC 5, AG 56, WE 104, BL 50, ST 13, IN 12, WI 13, DE 12, CO 11, CH 9, MI None, WN

The inn's lowest floor is taken up with its kitchens and dining rooms. Upstairs, there is private accommodation for thirty and common rooms for another forty. Popular with merchants, it is likely to be fully booked if there is a caravan in town. The Stormridan's relative excellence means that it is often made use of by the Counseil to put up official guests. Common visitors are: Lelfos Gefacleofian (10), Aslas of the Temple (10), Timis the Sage (10), Zotaquaan Aef Tor Wysard (5), Alros Snakaeage (10), Dareon Aelfhaer (15), Elisim Deorctunge (20), Garos Treowegefa (5), Tirouv Polarion (15).

Irilian Societies

The Psionic Fellowship. The area around Irilian is notorious for its intolerance of psionics – – 'If the Gods had wanted us to have psionic powers, they would have made us Mind Flayers,' is a common view of the matter. Its psionics have therefore gone underground; forming the secret Psionic Fellowship to guard their interests and protect and train youngsters gifted with powers of the mind. The Fellowship's representative in Irilian is Djhela Bn'Griz: RA H, SX F, AL N, CL I. LV 8, HP 24, AC 6, WE 3791, BL 100, ST 12, IN 17, WI 16, DE 17, CO 12, CH 17, MI *+1 Ring of Protection, Scroll of Improved Invisibility* x 2, *Wand of Illusion* [*DMG*], WN Dagger.
Spells: 1st: *audible glamour, change self, colour spray, hypnotism.* 2nd: *hypnotic pattern, invisibility, mirror image.* 3rd: *fear, spectral force.* 4th: *phantasmal killer.* Psionic Ability 160, Attack Modes AE, Defence Modes FI, Disciplines: *ESP, Sensitivity to Psychic Impressions, Object Reading; Telepathy.*

Currently on a two year secondment to Irilian, Djhela is thoroughly bored. Unable to locate a single psionic, latent or otherwise, she is ready for anything which might prove a diversion. Although intrigued by the Rubis Weg well, she has reluctantly decided that she has not the ability to investigate alone and that she cannot afford to reveal herself to anyone who might assist her. The Psionic Fellowship is known to but does not know of Zotaquaan Aef Tor Wysard.

Shops

dS1 Apothecary (salves, tinctures, potions etc). 15 Mark Geard (D5), ST 3, N1 4, N2 5, N3 6, CN PO, CM 1.0, YE 75098, WE 42308. The apothecary has the following items for sale. The price (P), damage healed (D) and number of each (NA) are given; each requires three daeg to manufacture.
Tincture of Healing: P 225gp, D 1d4, NA 10.
Salve of Healing: P 450gp, D 2d4, NA 5.
Salve of Great Healing: P 900gp, D 4d4, NA 3.
Potion of Disease : P 600gp, D will cure one disease in 1d4 daeg, NA 3. As with the Abbeie, none of these items are magical although their affects might seem so. Also available are a wide range of patent medicines (all useless but highly recommended by the owner) and the most common curative herbs from the *DMG* (60% for any specific one).

dS2 Baker. 5 Riht Rubis Weg (B5), ST 2, N1 5, N2 4, CN PO, CM 1.1, YE 8967, WE 4036.

dS3 Baker. 2 Luft Tor Weg (D7), ST 2, N1 3, N2 5, CN CO, CM 0.95, YE 9002, WE 3809.

dS4 Barber. 9 Luft Gealga Straet (B6), ST 3, N1 4, N2 5, N3 6, CN BA, CM 1.05, YE 7504, WE 3054.

dS5 Bookbinder. 6 Riht Rubis Weg (B5), ST 2, N1 6, N2 5, CN PO, CM 1.0, YE 11079, WE 4368.

dS6 Bookseller. 5 Riht Salmoun Straet (C6), ST 3, N1 5, N2 4, N3 5, CN AV, CM 1.3, YE 21046, WE 9675.

dS7 Bowyer, Great (long and composite bows). 17 Riht Rubis Weg (D6), ST 3, N1 4, N2 5, N3 6, CN PO, CM 1.2, YE 37495, WE 19087.

dS8 Bowyer, Lesser (shortbows). 20 Riht Rubis Weg (D7), ST 2, N1 3, N2 6, CN CO, CM 1.1, YE 13509, WE 6089.

dS9 Butcher. 6 Luft Monastan Clos (D5), ST 2, N1 3, N2 4, CN PO, CM 1.0, YE 8979, WE 3983.

dS10 Butcher. 14 Riht Gealga Straet (B6), ST 2, N1 3, N2 6, CN PO, CM 0.9, YE 9021, WE 4005.

dS11 Chandler, Wax (candles). 4 Luft Fyr Rad (E6), ST 2, N1 4, N2 7, CN PO, CM 1.0, YE 8798, WE 4032.

dS12 Chandler, Tallow (candles). 4 Riht Fyr Rad (E7), ST 1, N1 4, CN BA, CM 1.1, YE 6009, WE 1980.

dS13 Chapemaker (buckles and scabbard fittings). 14 Riht Rubis Weg (C6), ST 3, N1 3, N2 5, N3 7, CN BA, CM 1.1, YE 18253, WE 9078.

dS14 Cobbler (repair shoes). 2 Riht Gealga Straet (A5) ST 2, N1 3, N2 4, CN CO, CM 0.9. YE 8859, WE 4123.

dS15 Cordwainers (makes shoes, boots). 2 Luft Hros Straet (B5), ST 2, N1 3, N2 5, CN BA, CM 1.1, YE 8796, WE 3432.

dS16 Coursours (horse dealer). 11 Riht Monaston Clos (E6), ST 1, N1 5, CN AV, CM 1.1, YE 9584, WE 4135.

dS17 Crossbowyer (crossbows, arbalests). 14 Luft Rubis Weg (D7), ST 2, N1 4, N2 6, CN PO, CM 1.05, YE 18394, WE 8675.

dS18 Currier (dresses and colours leather). 6 Luft Gealga Straet (B6), ST 1, N1 4, CN BA, CM 1.0, YE 6386, WE 2946.

dS19 Dairy. 1 Luft Gild Laen (C6), ST 2, N1 3, N2 4, CN PO, CM 1.0, YE 6012, WE 1902.

dS20 Drummaker. 5 Riht Met Weg (C5), ST 2, N1 4, N2 6, CN BA, CM 1.0, YE 9012, WE 4031.

dS21 Farrier (shoes horses). 3 Riht Monastan Clos (D5), ST 2, N1 3, N2 6, CN BA, CM 1.1, YE 18021, WE 9010.

dS22 Felmonger (sells untanned skins). 4 Luft Gealga Straet (B5), ST 1, N1 4, CN PO, CM 1.0, YE 5980, WE 1908.

dS23 Fletcher (arrows, darts). 13 Luft Rubis Weg (D6), ST 2, N1 4, N2 7, CN CO, CM 1.05, YE 7530, WE 3180.

dS24 Fishmonger. 5 Riht Mathkr Laen (C7), ST 1, N1 4, CN PO, CM 1.0, YE 5984, WE 1608.

dS25 Fruiterer (fruit). 4 Riht Diament Rad (E6), ST 2, N1 4, N2 6, CN BA, CM 1.0, YE 10978, WE 4539.

dS26 Furrier (furs). 4 Riht Tor Weg (D7), ST 3, N1 3, N2 1, N3 7, CN PO, CM 1.2, YE 45687, WE 28945. Owned by Garos Treogegefa (Part 4).

dS27 Galochemaker (waterproof shoes). 6 Riht Tan Straet (B6), ST 2, N1 4, N2 3, CN PO, CM 1.0, YE 8998, WE 3978.

dS28 Garbler (spice sifter). 6 Riht Fals Straet (E6), ST 2, N1 4, N2 6, CN PO, CM 1.0, YE 7234, WE 2930.

dS29 Harnessmaker (animal harnesses). 8 Riht Monastan Clos (D6), ST 2, N1 4, N2 4, CN PO, CM 1.1, YE 10231, WE 4393.

dS30 Hawker (hawks, falcons). 5 Riht Diament Rad (E7), ST 2, N1 4, N2 1, CN PO, CM 1.3, YE 26745, WE 13543.

dS31 Herbalist. 11 Mark Geard (E5), ST 3, N1 6, N2 7, CN AV, CM 1.0, YE 67094, WE 36845.

dS32 Horner (horn articles). 14 Mark Geard (E5), ST 3, N1 5, N2 4, N3 8, CN PO, CM 1.1, YE 59886, WE 39005.

dS33 Illuminator (manuscripts). 3 Riht Met Weg (C5), ST 2, N1 4, N2 5, CN PO, CM 1.5, YE 18086, WE 9015.

dS34 Inker (ink). 9 Riht Met Weg (D5), ST 2, N1 2, N2 7, CN PO, CM 1.0, YE 9078, WE 4090.

dS35 Instrumentmaker, Musical (sackbuts, viols etc). 2 Luft Salmoun Rad (B5), ST 2, N1 3, N2 5, CN PO, CM 1.2, YE 18098, WE 9075.

dS36 Instrumentmaker, Scientific (astrolabes etc). 4 Riht Rubis Weg (B5), ST 3, N1 3, N2 5, N3 6, CN PO, CM 1.5, YE 33064, WE 20944.

dS37 Leatherworker (small leather articles). 10 Riht Gealga Straet (B6), ST 2, N1 3, N2 6, CN BA, CM 0.95, YE 5987, WE 2014.

dS38 Limner (insignia, portrait painter). 2 Luft Fals Straet (D6), ST 3, N1 2, N2 6, CN BA, CM 1.2, YE 19078, WE 9078.

dS39 Macer (maces, flails, morning-stars). 2 Riht Munuc Weg (C6), ST 2, N1 4, N2 4, CN PO, CM 1.1, YE 37509, WE 19068.

dS40 Miller. 2 Luft Rubis Weg (C5), ST 4, N1 3, N2 1, N3 1, N4 1, CN PO, CM 1.0, YE 19008, WE 8907. The mill is wind-powered; its upper three stories may be pivoted to face the wind.

dS41 Orglemaker (organs). 4 Riht San Hael (C6), ST 2, N1 4, N2 7, CN PO, CM 1.0, YE 18021, WE 8943.

dS42 Parchmenter (parchment, vellum). 7 Riht Met Weg (D7), ST 2, N1 1, N2 3, CN BA, CM 1.0, YE 8789, WE 3897.

dS43 Pepperer (spices). 1 Luft San Hael (C6), ST 2, N1 4, N2 4, CN PO, CM 1.3, YE 44987, WE 26014.

dS44 Pickler (preserves in brine). 7 Riht Gealga Laen (B6), ST 2, N1 2, N2 7, CN BA, CM 1.0, YE 10584, WE 4397.▷

▷*dS45 Pole Armourer* (pole-arms). 12 Luft Rubis Weg (D6), ST 2, N1 2, N2 6, N3 8, CN PO, CM 1.0, YE 17509, WE 7864.

dS46 Quarreller (quarrels). 1 Riht Fals Straet (D6), ST 2, N1 3, N2 5, CN BA, CM 1.1, YE 9240, WE 4019.

dS47 Quivermaker. 18 Riht Rubis Weg (D6), ST 1, N1 4, CN PO, CM 1.0, YE 9506, WE 4103.

dS48 Salter (preserves in salt). 7 Luft Magikos Weg (D7), ST 1, N1 4, CN BA, CM 0.9, YE 7609, WE 3179.

dS49 Scabbardmaker. 5 Luft Munuc Weg (C6), ST 2, N1 3, N2 5, CN PO, CM 1.0, YE 8674, WE 2904.

dS50 Skinner (animal skins). 4 Riht Gealga Straet (A5), ST 3, N1 2, N2 4, N3 1, CN BA, CM 1.0, YE 11073, WE 4392.

dS51 Stables. Between Grimmr Tor and Sanguin Tor (B7), ST 1 N1 3, CN PO, CM 1.1, YE 9081, WE 3104.

dS52 Swordsmith (swords and daggers). 3 Riht Munuc Weg (D6), ST 3, N1 2, N2 6, N3 8, CN AV, CM 1.2, YE 45031, WE 22410.

dS53 Tanner (tans skins). 3 Luft Gealga Straet (B5), ST 2, N1 3, N2 4, CN PO, CM 1.0, YE 59048, WE 1740.

dS54 Weaponsmith (axes, javelins, picks, spears, slings). 2 Luft Munuc Weg (C6), ST 3, N1 2, N2 1, N3 8, CN PO, CM 1.0, YE 15109, WE 7201.

dS55 Whittawyer (white leather). 12 Riht Gealga Straet (B6), ST 2, N1 1, N2 6, CN BA, CM 1.2, YE 11354, WE 5749.

dS56 Wineshop. 8 Riht Rubis Weg (C5), ST 2, N1 2, N2 7, CN BA, CM 1.0, YE 9010, WE 4108.

dS57 Wineskinner (wine, water skins). 1 Luft Gealga Straet (B5), ST 1, N1 3, CN CO, CM 1.0, YE 5985, WE 2014.

SE1 Sclavafreodom. 4 Riht Fals Straet (D6), ST 2, N1 2, N2 1, CN CO. Since Irilian is a major centre for slave-trading, the Sclavafreodom, an anti-slavery society, has a strong presence. Its recently arrived leader in Irilian, Perilas Sangcleog, is a stall holder in the Mark Geard. RA H, SX F, AL CG, CL F, LV 5, HP 63, AC 2, AG 43, WE 408, BL Incorruptable, ST 18(60) (+2/+3), IN 17, WI 16, DE 17, CO 18, CH 17, MI *+2 Ring of Protection, +3 Cloak of Protection, +3 Frostbrand Longsword*, +6 vs fire-using creatures, IN 14, EGO 13, AL CG, Speaks Chaotic Good, Common, Detects Good and Evil, Traps and Ambushes in a 1" radius. WN Sword.

The possessor of that rare thing in Irilian, a social conscience, and a masterly tactician; Perilas has decided upon a strategy of attacking slave caravans as they near Irilian. So successful has this been that Irilian's slave trade has been reduced to almost nothing with the result that the slave traders have offered 1000gp and the Counseil a further 500gp for her head. Perilas is known to and secretly assisted by Teral Guthdohtor and Elean of the Abbeie [Part 2].

The Sclavafreodom maintains two safe houses in Irilian both staffed by sympathetic Irilians; twelve in total.

SE2 2 Riht Sclava Weg (D6). ST 2, N1 1, N2 3, CN CO.

SE3 3 Riht Hros Straet (B5). ST 2, N1 2, N2 4, CN BA.

GV1 Gild Aef Venteners. 10 Riht Met Weg (D5), ST 3, N1 3, N2 5, N3 6, CN PO. The Gild Aef Venteners provides a range of services for adventurers in and around Irilian. Gild members have to donate 20% of all their income to the Gild, help each other whenever possible, avenge the death of a Gildman, and respect and obey the Gild Maestre. In return, the Gild will provide accommodation at its Gild Hus, use its funds of 49593gp to assist Gildsmen in trouble, providing ransoms against later payment for example, store valuables in its strongroom (50 DPV, *firetrapped*, triple poison locked and looked over by the Gild of Hashishiyy), support adventurers' dependents; and act as a clearing house for information. It will also find characters employment if necessary – usually as poorly paid bodyguards – and assist characters to recruit henchmen and hirelings; having records on most characters in the area around Irilian. The Gild arranges introductions for characters wishing training at a cost equal to 5% of the training fee. The trainers available are:

Cleric:	Aslas of the Temple
Fighter:	Commandere Aef Hors
Ranger:	Anhalas of the Scouts
Thief:	Hirean of the Gealgagang
Illusionist, Monk,	
Bard:	Not Available
Druid:	Acfyst the Druid
Paladin:	Serial Vengerdohtor
Magic User:	Zotaquaan Aef Tor Wysard
Assassin:	Torgul of the Hashishiyy

These characters will not automatically provide training since alignment and religious considerations might dictate otherwise.

The Gild Maestre is Gisiral Lemphealt, a fighter who has retired after losing a leg in a flyman hive. RA H, SX M, AL N, CL F, LV 5, HP 20, AC 0, AG 63, WE 970, BL 100, ST 12, IN 14, WI 15, DE 10, CO 7, CH 13, MI *+1 Shield, +1 Plate Mail, +1 Longsword* (NSA), WN Sword. A brusque old man, Gisiral is fond of reminiscing and comparing modern adventurers unfavourably to the *real* men (and dwarves and elves and gnomes and halflings and...) that there were in his time.

Gildsmen may, if they wish, keep their membership secret, those that do so are marked with an (S) on the membership list. The Gildsmen are: The Irilian Scouts, Commandere Aef Hors, Hliehhanman Commandere, Serial and Ankos of the Abbeie (S), Acfyst the Druid, the Chantrman, Pelnos of the Temple, Gilos from the Grifoun (S), Zigul from the Heafod Aef Orc, Sigil and Agrae from the Heafod Aef Orc, Torgul of the Gild of Hashishiyy, Hirean of the Gealgagang (S).

Irilian Gilds and Companies. Gilds in Irilian are not as powerful as they are in other independent towns since they are effectively controlled by the Counseil. Thus, rather than constituting a power bloc separate from the government as is usual, they form part of that government and are used by it to control the trades. Also unusually, their regulatory and social functions have been split. In common with all Gilds, their primary function is regulating the trades but their social functions have been taken over by the Wardgilds. Membership of a Gild is restricted to Irilian citizens who can provide proof of their competency in their craft and pay the Gild Fee of 5gp. Only members of a Gild or Company may carry on a trade in Irilian.

Gilds and Companies are very similar; the main difference being in the Gilds' greater status rather than in size or power. Together Gilds and Companies may form a larger grouping known as a Trade; it is these Trades which are controlled by the Counseil members [Part 4]. Each Gild or Company has its own Gild Maestre who together with the Sundi (Gild Syndic) regulates its affairs. Each Trade is governed by a Gran Maestre (all Counseil Members) who settles intergild disputes. Intertrade squabbles are referred to the Cort Civilis.

To save space, where a shop has been mentioned in Irilian it will be that of a Gild Maestre (if there is more than one shop of a particular type, the richest is that of the Gild Maestre, the others are the Sundi's); it is up to the DM to detail others of the same type if necessary. Generally, these will be smaller with one craftsman of journeyman rank and 1d2 apprentices and be engaged in piecework for a Gild Maestre's workshop.

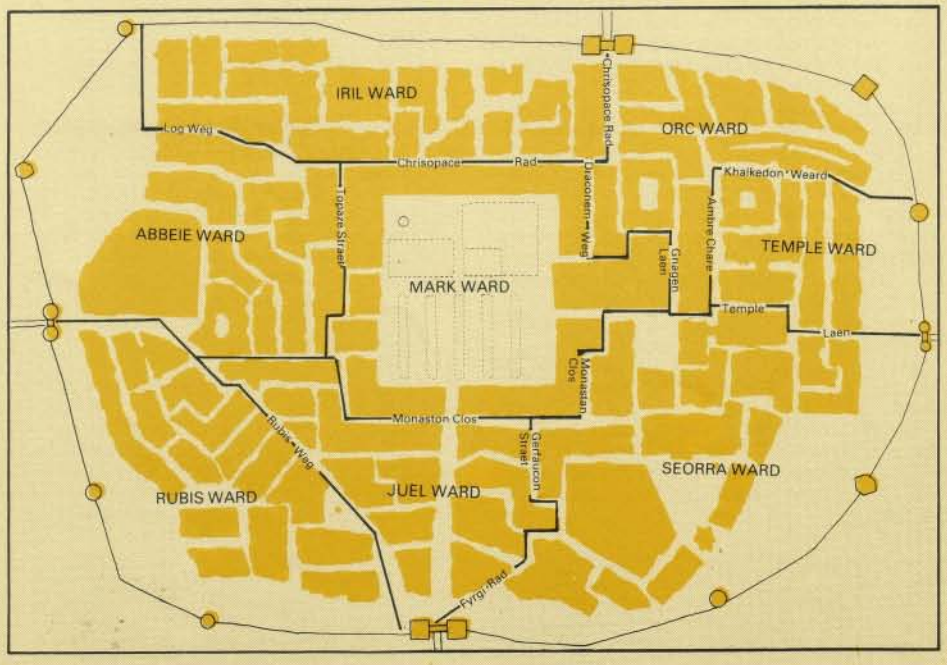
The major Trades in order of decreasing status are: the Weaponers and Armourers, Jewellers, Metallers, Clothworkers and Leatherworkers, Gilds and Companies of Learning, Housers, Woodworkers, Victuallers and, lastly, the Lighters.

Wardgilds. Each Electoral [see map; and The Counseil, in Part 4,] Ward in Irilian has its Wardgild; an organisation of its occupants for mutual support. Each Wardgild has roughly 500 members who each play from 5-50sp per year depending upon income. The funds are used to support destitute members of the Ward, pay for funerals, foster orphans and otherwise provide a very basic social service. Each Wardgild has a counseil which regulates its affairs.

Utgilds. Similar to the Wardgilds, the Utgilds serve races rather than geographical areas. They are small in size; having at most 20-30 members in Irilian although their membership outside the town can run into the thousands. Their funds are likewise restricted, averaging about 100gp. The major Utgilds with their Gild Maestres are: Dwarves: Disrim the Banker. Elves: Arien, Elisim Deorctunge's bodyguard. Gnomes: Erea Gasrintri. Half-orcs: Zigfa from the Gnome Juel Aef.

All non-humans in Irilian will be members of their respective Utgilds; donating 2% of their income in dues. Only characters of the race concerned may join an Utgild.□

IRILIAN POLITICAL BOUNDARIES



Microview *is a regular computer column, edited by Mike Costello. This issue,* Microview *looks at some computer Play-by-Mail games.*

Play-by-Mail Games

by A D Young

Computer-moderated PBM is an area of computer gaming not previously covered in Microview. *The computer program that 'drives' the game remains with the moderator and the output it produces is sent to the player, usually in the form of a line-printer dump. Until recently most of these games were run only in the States, although they were generally available to overseas players and some are 'post-boxed' in the UK. Now there are many new games springing up in this country, which we hope to review in future* Microviews. *The games reviewed here are American games available on an air-mail basis to UK players, and anyone interested should write directly to the States for up-to-date Registration and Turn costs. Addresses:* Empyrean Challenge, Superior Simulations, *P O Box 505, Fairfield, ID 83327, USA. (£3 per Turn and up);* Heroic Fantasy, FBI, *PO Box 1467, Scottsdale, AZ 85252, USA. (£1 or more per Turn). –MC.*

Empyrean Challenge

This is a computer-moderated, multi-player grand strategic space game. It accommodates 150 players, each of whom is the Ruler of one of fifteen nation states on a single planet, belonging to one to ten races each with its separate planet. There are 100 systems with from 1 to 10 planets. Victory is gained by an individual if he controls about 100 (or more) planets for four turns and no other player has half as much, or by a race if they collectively control 50% or more of all habitable worlds.

If you think that task might prove arduous just keep reading, for you have not seen anything yet! Each planet may have open colonies, closed colonies and orbital colonies. There may be any number of ships which are treated exactly like colonies except that they can move between planets and star systems. The real crunch comes when you understand that each player must rule every one of his colonies in detail.

First of all consider the population. That is, the Unemployable, Unskilled, Professionals, Trainees, Soldiers, Construction Workers and Spies. There are millions of them. They must be fed, housed and paid for their work. It is necessary to set pay rates, provide sufficient farms and people to run them, sufficient structural material and CW to build them, and so forth. This will of course determine the birth rate, standard of living and death rate. Do a rotten job and you have a rebellion on your hands and fourteen other Rulers just waiting to move in. Now comes the hard part.

Each of the 25 items used in the game (such as missiles, space drives, factories, consumer goods, farms, hyper engines, energy shields, sensors etc etc) must be manufactured. Each requires a certain amount of metals and non-metals which must be mined from limited deposits. All movement, manufacture and use of materials and items requires transports, people and fuel (which of course is also mined). There is also a market and gold (mined) with which to buy and sell items. Some nations are richer in some raw materials than others, so barter and trade (or war) are necessary for the survival of the nation.

Inter-racial co-operation is very important, for those that cannot combine in a joint effort will rapidly go under to those that have. This is because the races are aiming to become space-faring and to compete successfully they require a high technological level. TL begins at 1 but may be boosted to the maximum of 10 by research. Increased TL is essential in warfare since several weapons effects are exponential in TL. In addition, high TL means more efficient use of resources. To become space-faring you require a space ship. This means manufacturing each item, building the structure to house them, the fuel, crew, cargo etc. That is, you design the ship yourself. Each design is put together by the player; there are no blueprints available. Thus every scout ship, battlewagon, coloniser or super freighter is custom made, and if the design is inferior that is just too bad.

Maxi-Challenge is a simpler variation of *Empyrean Challenge*. There are only 20 players and each controls the entire planet! A Ruler wins when he controls *all* non ship colonies. That may be hundreds but some relief from this burden can be achieved by appointing Regents. Even so, these are not games to be entered into lightly. They are obviously only for those space gamers who wish to immerse themselves totally in the role of Ruler of the galaxy.

Heroic Fantasy

This one is a fantasy role-playing game. It is entirely computer-moderated and represents the most advanced development of PBM FRP games using this moderation method. The game consists of a romp through a maze/dungeon in order to gain experience and treasure. Success on one level leads to a greater challenge on the next.

A dungeon party is put together from the 11 available races, which range from fairies through humans to giants. Only two character types (fighter and mage) may be chosen, with the latter costing more than fighters. Humans represent the best value but a close reading of the rules indicates that a well balanced party is best, since certain prizes and potions are more easily used by some races than others. The party (of no more than 15) begins at one of the Entrance rooms of the dungeon, fully equipped and raring to go.

Heroic Fantasy is non-sexist and, just as with the racial blend, a balance of sexes is advised. The maze is multi-level with rooms leading off one another. Only a bare description of any location is given, usually consisting of no more than the room name, eg 'Hot Room' and an equally exciting monster if present – Black Panther, or whatever. There may also be a prize such as a potion or some simple trinket. This is rather poor fare for adventurers used to richly endowed human DM-run games, but you must remember the limitations of the computing system. However, the emphasis is on player interaction and this is *Heroic Fantasy's* forte. Here you can have a dungeon adventure with many other players. No more trying to get a group together for that too brief RP session; the PBM nature of the game ensures that fellow dungeoneers are laid on.

Player-characters have a name and in each turn may perform one 'take' (potion or prize), one major action (movement, combat, jimmy door, major magic), one minor action (use a prize or minor magic) and one speech. When the number of characters which may interact is considered, this range of actions is quite sufficient to provide a fairly complex set of encounters. Characters may be attacked, defended or shielded, with combat consisting of either an attack, ambush, guard (object) or defend (character) order for each character.

The usual Strength and Constitution are a character's only attributes. Strength is used in fighting, defending, moving, jimmying doors and casting blast spells. To stay alive, a Constitution greater than zero is necessary and of course it decreases when hits are taken. Mages have a choice of several minor spells each turn and three major spells (sleep, blast and fireball) which require a turn of preparation before casting. The 'speech' which each character may make per turn is quite sufficient for communicating name and address and even longer messages if necessary.

The computer printout shows the 'speech' in the room in which the character ends the turn, allowing any other player who can see that room to read it. A distance of up to two rooms may be moved per turn and the printout includes all rooms that a player's characters have left, passed through or arrived at. With this system, even a minimal dispersion will result in a lengthy printout and many player interactions occurring.

Heroic Fantasy does have a problem with the simplicity of the game system and lack of detailed description. Many FRP gamers may not find this to their taste. The game is a well thought out hack and slash adventure which does provide some light-hearted fun, mostly through player interaction. It also demonstrates that fully computerised FRPGs are possible and will very likely be the forerunner of more detailed games.□

THRUD THE BARBARIAN

THE TROVELLERS

CHAPTER 1: DIE! DIE! DIE!

The **Osprey** leaves **Hyperspace**, dimension of perpetual commercials, and surprises everyone by not colliding with anything...

HURRUMPH! **SHIP'S COMPUTER** HERE. HATE TO BREAK INTO YOUR VIGOROUS **WORK** PERIOD GUYS, BUT I'VE JUST DETECTED AN **ATARI DEATH SQUADRON**. SENSORS INDICATE THEY HAVE A STRONG **DISLIKE** FOR **HAYES**. TOUGH LUCK HAYES...

Meanwhile... onward rush the Atari Death Squadron, the words of their leader ringing in their ears...

"Ringing" because it is in fact a tape recording. Atari's are a dense race and can't remember anything to save their lives...

NEXT MONTH: HAYES' SECRET!

Fiend Factory *is a regular department featuring readers' monsters for* D&D/AD&D *edited by Albie Fiore. This issue...*

Death in Green

A D&D/AD&D Mini-Scenario for a medium high level party of 4-8 adventurers

Outline for DM
The party are headed towards Yelloton, a remote settlement in the outlands. Once a gold town, it turned to agriculture when the gold ran out. Lately, some trappers moved in and some fine quality chamois leathers, deer antlers, etc have been coming back down the trade routes: but supplies have ceased recently. Rumours on the trail are that there is trouble in Yelloton, but none know what as links with the distant settlement are tenuous. The group can just stumble on the place, be hired by merchants to discover why trade has ceased or be 'visited' by the Dame Verte when in the vicinity. She will try to persuade them to purge 'her' woods of the evil, even resorting to 'seducing' the leader if necessary.

The Situation
West of Yelloton is an area of woodland that had remained undisturbed until the trappers came. Their activities angered the Vily who then nurtured evil plants to wage a successful attack on the humans. Whether or not the players were enlisted by the Dame Verte, she will offer unseen help if possible and materialise to thank them should they destroy the Vily who have taken over her patch.

As the players approach Yelloton, they will see that the settlement is curiously green. All the buildings are overgrown with plants. Weeds fill the streets. The surrounding fields are full of crops gone to seed. Beyond the western fields, in the distance, are some thick woods nestling at the foot of bare rocky hills. A stream runs from the woods through the village. The stream has been poisoned by the Vily. The buildings are overgrown with poison ivy in which lurk the

IVYIX
by Dale Hueber

No Appearing:	2-5
Armour Class:	6
Movement:	12"
Hit Dice:	2d8
Treasure:	V
Attack:	Two claws for 1-2 each plus special
Alignment:	Neutral evil
Intelligence:	Low

These intelligent plant creatures inhabit areas infested with poison ivy. Ivyix hate animal life, especially humanoids, and seek to destroy small farms and communities. They are vine-thin, halfling-sized humanoids with leafy heads and bark-like skin. Their thorny claws do 1-2 damage each and cause a poison ivy rash if a save versus poison at −2 is not made.

They are 85% undetectable while in their poison ivy lairs and can affect this growth as an *entangle* once per day or *plant growth* (not as attack) at will. They are susceptible to fire, saving at −2 and taking +1 point of damage per die inflicted. However, if they are burned, the smoke causes a burning, itching cough for a range of (15') for 2-5 rounds and there is a 15% chance of poison ivy infecting the lungs, causing them to fill with fluid which results in death in 1-7 days unless *cure disease* is used.

Once a week the ivyix can communally attack a psionically aware individual with a Mind Thrust of 75 points. They are immune to psionic attack.

As they are plants, certain spells will not affect them, eg *charm person,* etc.

The buildings are derelict. In some of the darker rooms and cellars will be found

CRIMSON CARPET
by Mark Byng
This deep red moss, also known as the 'scarlet death plant', grows in patches from 5-20' square, in dark or underground locations. A careful search will nearly always find bones nearby. For each round that any creature is exposed to the plant, there is a 1% cumulative chance that the creature will suffer from a hideous and deadly illusion, treat as a *phantasmal killer* with disbelief attempt allowed, except that the creature, once touched must make a System Shock save - success means that the victim has fallen unconscious for 3 turns; failure means that the victim has died from heart failure.

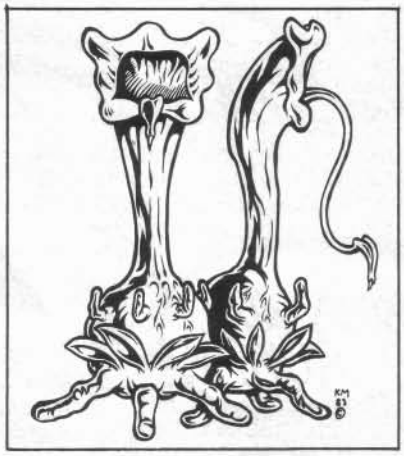
The exposure range is 15'. Anyone eating the moss will certainly suffer the delusion 5-20 rounds after eating.

Among the overgrown crops lurk many

ACROPHIDS
by John Gordon

No Appearing:	1-20
Armour Class:	Stem: 6; Lash: 0; Bole: 3
Movement:	3"
Hit Dice:	2d8 (Bole: 1d8; Lash: 1hp; Stem: remainder)
Treasure:	None
Attack:	Lash for 1d4 plus poison
Alignment:	Neutral
Intelligence:	Animal (approx)

These man-sized, carnivorous plants have small, tough boles topped by long, swaying stems which end in a sickly, pale and fleshy flower. Concealed in the flower is a 10' long lash tipped with a poisonous sting. Attached to the bole are several small sticks which rattle allowing the plants to transmit rudimentary messages to each other (eg, 'food', 'danger', etc). They can move slowly on their tough fibrous roots but dislike moving across stone or wooden surfaces.



If the lash or stem is 'killed', the bole will flee. If the bole is killed, the plant dies.

Acrophids feed on decaying flesh, picking morsels off with their sting and dropping them into the flower to be digested. They kill to keep up the supply, usually by lurking unseen (75% chance) in the undergrowth by paths or tracks, attacking anything man-sized or smaller that comes into the range of the 10' sting. The sting has a limited supply of venom. The first hit does an additional 2d8 poison damage (if save fails); the second, 1d8; the third, 1d4; and the fourth, 1-2 after which the poison sac is empty. It takes 1 week to be ready to fight again but the lash can still do 1d4 points of damage without the poison. The sting leaves an ugly red weal on its victims. If the lash is 'killed', it will regenerate in 1-6 months.

Acrophids occasionally wipe out small hamlets if there are sufficient numbers to do so. They reproduce both vegetatively and by wind pollination, although 90% of the seeds are sterile. *(Based on the triffid from John Wyndham's* Day of the Triffids*)*

In the woods, some ivyix and acrophids will still be encountered. All routes into the lair of the vily, deep in the darkest recess of the woods, near a cascading waterfall, are protected. There are many 'boulders' on and around all access points. These are really

THE PUFFBALL PLANT
by Mark Byng
Puffballs are spherical hollow fungi, usually found growing on recently disturbed soil and easily mistaken for boulders due to their colouring. Each is from

6" to 2' in diameter and from 4-24 will be found growing in any one spot. 1 in 4 of the puffballs will be 'ripe' - size giving no clue as to ripeness. If a ripe puffball is disturbed, it will burst, releasing a cloud of spores over a 15' radius. All creatures in this area must save versus poison or become slightly intoxicated (as *DMG*, pp82-83 for effects). Slightly intoxicated creatures become moderately intoxicated if they fail a save versus the effects of a second puffball; moderately intoxicated creatures become greatly intoxicated if they fail against a third; any further inhalation of spores will result in a comotose slumber lasting 7-10 hours. Recovery time from intoxication is as *DMG*. They can grow in subterranean locations.

VILY
by Dale Bartlett

No Appearing:	1-12
Armour Class:	6 (0)
Movement:	12"/24"
Hit Dice:	3d8 or better
Treasure:	A (4'-5' also have G; 5½'-6' also U)
Attack:	By weapon type or bite for 2d4 plus two claws for 1-3 each
Alignment:	Chaotic neutral
Intelligence:	Genius (15-18)

Vily are dangerous female wood spirits, 3'-6' in height. They like to live next to streams or in beautiful groves where they are encountered 80% of the time. The taller, more powerful ones dwell in dense forests often in a fabulous white fortress or mountaintop watch-tower. The smaller, less powerful ones, inhabit scrubland or woods. They have fair complexion, long, curly brown hair hanging down to their feet and invisible (but fully functional) white feathered wings which can be seen by *detect invisible* or similar. They are very beautiful, but have sharp claws and iron teeth with which they can attack, in desperate cases. They go to great lengths to protect their charges - usually their woods and the animals within it: even to doctoring streams with a poison affecting only humans and demi-humans and lethal in tiny quantities. They will also use long or short bows, according to their height, to fire poisoned arrows (save at −2) to repel intruders but prefer to use their formidable magic powers. Their bows are often magical.

All vily can shout loudly, causing *fear* to all in hearing (normal save applies). They can also *cure* or *cause* the following, twice each per day: *blindness; light wounds; serious wounds; disease; dumbness; insanity*. (Note: each *type* may only be cast twice ie they can *cause light wounds* twice or *cure light wounds* twice or do each once per day but not *cause* and *cure light wounds* twice each in a day. Once per day, they can also *raise dead* and use *finger of death* (no save). All vily save as a 7th level cleric minimum.

Those living deep in forests gain 1 hit die, and 1 level of magic user and 1 level of clerical ability for each 6" of height. Thus a 6' vila has 12th level MU and clerical powers on top of her normal ones.

Those with additional magic ability obtain *ice storm* as a 3rd level spell. They may cause the loss of one eye rather than blindness, and can also, once per week, *curse* a human or demi-human to die ravaged by fever in 3 days. The *curse* may be lifted at will by the vily or by *remove curse* followed by *cure disease*.

All have a limited shape-change ability, preferring the form of a powerful white horse (equal to heavy warhorse), silver wolf (as dire wolf but with a hoar fox's [*FF*] frost breath weapon and immunity to cold), or falcon to most others.

They are immensely jealous of other beautiful women. Any with 17+ charisma will be instantly attacked (20% chance per point below 17 of no attack). However, they are often well disposed to brave and handsome men and will, occasionally, even change into horses so that their favourite hero need not walk.

Anyone (male or female) aiding a vila in extreme danger is likely to be made a blood-sister (vileniki). Such people vanish to some unknown place (possibly another Plane, or deep in the vily's forest) for 3(50%), 7(25%), 13(20%), or 21(5%) years and upon return will have magic user/cleric powers of level equal to the number of years they were away and which may not be advanced unless they were originally of either of those classes. Any previous class/powers are retained. These powers are obtained (at DM's discretion) even if not normally obtainable by that alignment or race (so druids could gain clerical abilities). Judging by the arts taught to vileniki, vily may well attain 21st level in each. Only one such vila probably exists on this or any other Plane, and would be of divine status.

The life of a vila is tied to her particular plant (fruit, nut, beech and fir trees being favoured) much as a dryad is tied to her oak. A vila, however, can travel any distance from her tree and need not visit it for years. If it is cut down or killed, she will die, but if killed in this way, will invariably be avenged by her sisters (both vily and vileniki). Vila-trees are indistinguishable from normal ones.

Although chaotic and often violent, malicious and cruel, vily can be helpful if in a good mood. Strangely, they never break their word having once given it.

Their natural armour class is 6, but they wear shimmering white gowns which convey AC0. The gowns, if taken, retain this property for 1 year, and may be used by any of suitable height (attempts to cut them to size will ruin them completely).

Only high level vily are likely to be met alone. Others are commonly found in threes and sometimes greater numbers.

DAME VERTE
by Ed Dovey

No Appearing:	1 or 1-3
Armour Class:	7
Movement:	12"
Hit Dice:	5d8
Treasure:	I, S, V
Attack:	By weapon type (usually +1 dagger)
Alignment:	Neutral
Intelligence:	Exceptional to Supra-genius
Psionic Ability	176; Attack/Defence Modes: A,C/F,G

Dame vertes were a sisterhood of wise elven women devoted to the care and protection of primeval woodland and the study of the ethereal. Eons ago, they became ethereal in nature, now dwelling almost exclusively on the Ethereal Plane. Each cares for a forest on the Prime Material Plane where they can travel invisibly, being able to become ethereal and invisible at will.

They can use both illusionist and magic user spells at 11th level of ability, have 50% magic resistance, and have exceptional intelligence and charisma (15-20) in both. Although strictly neutral, they will covertly aid those combatting evil creatures invading or bringing harm to their woods. However, they may seek to lead travellers astray, or to seduce male characters (as 5th level houri ,*WD13* or *Best of WD: Articles 1*) after which the character may be afflicted by *love sickness* (as 4th level houri spell). The chance of this is 60% for a dame verte of 20 charisma, 50% for 19, etc. They will punish or humiliate overbearing parties or those full of their own importance.

If a group does clear a dame verte's forest of some evil, on a positive reaction (normal reaction throw +10%), she will appear in a shimmering green irridescence preceeded by a strong breeze carrying the smell of freshly turned earth. She will greet them by name and thank them for their service. She will offer either to answer three questions, or, if pressed for a reward, one of her magic items (including any malevolent ones, the true nature of which she will reveal). If a reward is chosen, she will never aid any of that group again. She will be greatly angered by any ingratitude.

A dame verte's minor psionic devotions are: *Sensitivity to Psychic Impressions, Invisibility* and *Animal Telepathy*; and her major science is *Etherealness*.□

Swashbuckler!

Combat Related Ideas

RuneRites is a regular RuneQuest column, edited by Oliver Dickinson. This issue, a discussion of additions to the melee rules.

For Panash cultists, some of Oliver Macdonalds suggestions on non-standard weapon/attack modes are a must.

1. Use of a cloak, blanket, or any similar piece of cloth ruled to be big enough by the GM. The basic abilities are 25% parry, 5% attack, with training costs on the 500/1000/2000L system. A successful parry with a cloak does not cause it damage; instead it functions as a shield, absorbing a maximum 8 points of damage, and is destroyed if it takes more than 12 in a single blow. The effects of a successful attack depends on the location hit. A limb will be bound, and another successful attack the following MR will disarm or trip the defender; a head hit will blind the defender for the next MR; a chest hit will bind an arm, but will not allow a disarm attempt next MR; an abdomen hit will allow the attacker an attempt to knock down the defender next MR in a STR v STR roll on the resistance table. This assumes a fairly humanoid opponent.

2. Jumping onto other characters. A successful Jump roll has to be made. A hit will do damage to the defender as if he/she had fallen, + half the attacker's damage bonus; but if the attacker does more damage than his/her Jumping skill divided by 5, any damage over that figure will be taken by the attacker. *Example*: Gnasher the baboon jumps 3m onto the back of an adventurer and does 1d6 + half his damage bonus (½d6), in fact doing the maximum 9 points; however, he only has 40% Jumping skill, which divided by 5 gives 8; he therefore does 9 points of damage to the adventurer and 1 to himself. After a successful attack, the attacker may attempt to grapple with the defender or roll his/her Jumping skill again; success will mean that the attacker has landed on his/her feet and can perform normally the following MR. A successful attack may also knock the defender over; roll attacker's SIZ v defender's STR to knock down. Add 1 to attacker's SIZ for every metre jumped, and halve defender's STR if attack is a surprise.

If a jumping attack misses, the attacker must make a second Jumping roll, or will take damage as if from a fall.

3. Swinging from ropes/chandeliers. To attack in this way a character must make a roll of DEX x 5 to swing as desired, followed by a Kick/Jump/Grapple, depending on how he/she wishes to attack.

4. Biting. A character that successfully grapples an opponent may try to bite next MR for 1d3 points' damage [*if human; if, say, baboon, as in* RQ *–OD*]. The base chance is 25%, increased by experience only. At the GM's discretion, a character grappled by another may bite the attacker.

5. Catching. The chance of catching an object thrown at you is 25%+ Manipulation bonus, and can be learned on the scale 200/400/1000/EXP. Thrown weapons require a special hit (20% of basic chance) to catch. The chance to catch is reduced by half if anything larger than a dagger is held in either hand, and it is not possible to catch something if you are holding things in both hands. If a critical hit is rolled when using the catching skill, the item caught may be thrown back at the attacker in the same MR.

Next, some comments on surprise from Dave Morris; but note that to judge from *RQ* a successful surprise attack should add 20% to the attackers' percentage. I feel it might be unfair to apply this as well as the penalties below, but it could be added under 9-10.

The effect of being caught unawares on a party is likely to be a lot more serious than just a couple of lost Strike Ranks. In order to make the use of scouts and anti-ambush precautions worthwhile, and thus encourage better role-play, I propose the use of the following table. When surprise is indicated, roll 1d10.

1-3:	*Complete surprise.* Characters parry and defend at half value, and get no attack this MR; they can attack next MR at half value and +3 to Strike Rank. Thereafter they can fight normally.
4-6:	*Extreme surprise.* Characters parry at half value and get no attack this MR.
7-8:	*Surprise.* Characters parry at -10% or half value, whichever is higher; they may attack this MR, but at +4 to Strike Rank.
9-10:	*Partial surprise.* Characters attack at +2 to Strike Rank; no other penalty.

Finally, a more detailed way of modelling an aimed blow, from Ashley Holloway. During the Statement of Intent, players should state that they intend to aim a blow at a particular location. They must roll 1d6-1 and add this to their PC's normal Strike Rank to find the SR at which the blow can be delivered; if the result is over 12, the PC has failed to find an opening that MR, can make no other attack, and parries during the MR at half ability (rounded down). If a blow may be aimed, the attack is rolled and the actual roll subtracted from the normal chance to hit; the special hit (20%) chance with the weapon is added to the result, and to have successfully hit the location aimed at, the player must roll the total or less on d100. If this roll fails, d20 is rolled as usual to find the actual location hit, but if this produces the location originally aimed at, the PC has missed completely! Whether the aimed blow succeeds or fails, the defender has a chance to parry it. If the attack is successfull, INT x 3 (POW x 3 if not INT) must be rolled, or the parry will be at half ability (rounded up), but if it fails, only INT x 5 is needed.

To discover if the PC has made a special or critical aimed blow, or has fumbled, calculate from the percentage chance of making the blow, rounded down to the nearest 5%. The 1d6-1 addition to Strike Rank accounts not only for the time taken for the location to be opened up to the attacker, but also for any distraction that he/she might be subject to while concentrating on the blow, which would include being hit but taking no damage. If any damage is done before the aimed blow is executed, I suggest that (i) if the damage is less than the total HPs of the location, the attacker must roll CON x 5 to make the aimed blow, (ii) if it is equal to or exceeds the HPs in the arm not holding the weapon, the attacker must roll CON x 3 or less, and add 1d4-1 more to SR, to make the blow. Any other location wounded in this way would affect as detailed on *RQ* which would most certainly prevent the blow.

Example: Altoch Greystorm confronts a Scorpion Man, having ignorantly entered its nest; he decides that he must immediately lop its head from its shoulders. He is 65% with Pole Axe and normally attacks on SR4; rolling 1d6-1 he gets 3, so can attack on SR7. Altoch fails his parry at half ability rounded down (30%) and takes 9 points of damage in the abdomen; 2 get through to wound him, and he must roll CON x 5 to make his attack. He succeeds, and then rolls 22 for his attack; subtracting this from 65 leaves 43, to which the special hit chance of 13 is added, making the chance to hit the desired location 56. He rolls 09, a special hit; the Scorpion Man fails INT x 3 and its parry at half value, and off goes its head!□

The Hellwalk Spell

by Lew Pulsipher

Treasure Chest *is a regular department devoted to readers' ideas for* D&D/AD&D. *This issue Lew Pulsipher writes about a new and powerful spell that should make an interesting surprise for obstreperous players!*

This spell is more or less derived from Roger Zelazny's *Amber* series. The spell causes victim(s) to be transported to 'another dimension', a 'pocket universe', where they must defeat a series of monsters. When the last monster has been defeated or disappears after a lapse of time, the victim(s) return to their place of origin, in exactly the positions in which they left, ordinarily with no lapse of time on the plane of the origin.

The kind and number of monsters which appear are as per *monster summoning* spells. The relevant *monster summoning* delay also applies. The number of *summonings* the victims must endure depends on the grade of the *hellwalk* spell, from I to VII. For example, *hellwalk II* throws a *monster summoning I* result at the victims, then a *ms II*. *Hellwalk VII* pits the seven *monster summonings* against the victims in succession, from *ms I* to *ms VII*. If the victims cannot dispose of one set of monsters before the next set appears, they must fight all monsters present. All monsters attack the victims of the spell, never one another.

Here's an example of a *hellwalk IV*: On round X, 2-8 giant rats appear. On round X+1+1d4, 1-6 gnolls from the *ms II* appear. Let's say the 1d4 resulted in a 3. On round X+4+1d4, 1-4 giant lizards appear (*ms III*). In each case, 1 plus the *monster summoning* spell delay time is added to the previous total of rounds. Let's say that the d4 result is 2. Then on round X+8+1d3 the next monsters, from *monster summoning IV*, appear – say 1-3 owlbears. You can see why *hellwalk VII* would be a terrifying spell to be caught in.

There is no way to avoid monsters in *hellwalk*. *Teleportation, dimension door*, and *flying* are of no avail in the pocket universe. The monsters can still reach the characters as though all were standing on a flat, featureless plain. Anyone who attempts to run away will merely find himself approaching the monsters from behind. Similarly, the monsters can turn 'away' from the adventurers in order to come up behind them. Monsters appear within one melee round's movement from the victims, but cannot move or attack in that round, so the victims have initiative in the round of appearance. Each group of monsters disappears, dead or alive, 12 + *monster summoning* level rounds after appearance, at the end of the designated round. In the above example, the giant rats would disappear at the end of round X+13.

When *hellwalk* is cast it affects an area. This will vary with the nature of the caster, so the best guideline is to say that an entire adventuring party, if in reasonably close formation, would be affected by the spell. The spell cannot be concentrated on one person, or a small area, in order to send just one or two characters on the *hellwalk* nor can the caster choose to send some creatures but not others in the area.

Saving throws – the *hellwalk* is really party-oriented. If each victim saves individually, those saving not going, then an unfortunate character could find himself alone on the *hellwalk* because only he failed to save. Consequently, each character involved should save against magic, with the effects of the *hellwalk* reduced by successful saves as follows:

Percentage of victims who save	*Reduction in hellwalk grade*
0-49	none
50-75	one
76-99	two
100	three

For example, if three out of five victims save (60%), a *hellwalk VI* would be reduced to *hellwalk V*. If the spell is reduced below grade I, it has no effect. An alternative is simply to disallow saving throws completely.

Time does elapse within the *hellwalk* pocket universe, even though it ordinarily doesn't at the place where the spell was cast. Hence spells of limited duration may expire within the pocket universe, and others (such as *cures*) can be cast. But immediately the last monster dies, is incapacitated, or disappears, the victims return to their origin, in exactly the location each occupied when they left.

Components and casting time for the spell should vary with the nature of the spellcaster. An ordinary magic-user would have to use a complicated procedure, while a 'loner' might merely say one word. The *hellwalk* is obviously a powerful spell. Although it does not actually remove the victims from the main battle, they return (apparently instantaneously) much worn down, spells cast etc, perhaps actually incapacitated, from the Walk. (Return is instantaneous – otherwise the Hellwalk-caster's party would have time to prepare to attack the victims when they returned.) The higher grade *hellwalks* could slaughter an entire party. Consequently, I don't recommend it as an ordinary spell a magic-user can learn. But if you do allow MU characters to learn it, *hellwalk I* should be a third (or fourth) level spell, with other grades progressively higher.

Instead of treating it as a normal spell, the *hellwalk* can be treated as an innate magical ability possessed by a small, otherwise harmless creature, by a hermit, by a 'wild talent' magician – by someone who is unable to teach the spell to anyone and who is a loner. A minor *Hellwalk* would be a salutary experience for adventurers who won't quit bothering a creature of the woods such as a brownie or dryad. In the loner's case, a delay before the victims return to their origin would be appropriate to give the caster time to get away. There are many possibilities, but in any case an individual should be able to cast *hellwalk* no more than once per day. As an example, here are four full sequences. Now if you really want to make this spell hellish, have monsters appears in successive rounds without delay! □

MS Spell	*Delay (rounds)*	*First Sequence*	*Second Sequence*	*Third Sequence*	*Fourth Sequence*
I	1-4	7 giant rats	5 goblins	6 orcs	5 goblins
II	1-4	1 gnoll	3 troglodytes	5 giant toads	6 troglodytes
III	1-4	3 giant lizards	2 ochre jellies	3 bugbears	4 large spiders
IV	1-3	2 owlbears	3 gargoyles	1 5-headed hydra	3 werewolves
V	1-3	2 displacer beasts	1 sub. lizard	2 displacer beasts	2 amphisbaena
VI	1-3	2 wights	2 jackalwere	2 wights	2 8-headed hydra
VII	1	1 10-headed hydra	2 Type III demons	2 frost giants	1 giant slug

PIRATE EYE

Oct 1st '83

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Phew! It's GLENDA SLUG

The Half-Orc Heatwave

● **CLIVE Bailey!!! Dontcha just love himmmm!?!! Mmmmm!! After bustin' a gut over *Dragonmeet* he's now busy organisin' *GAMES DAY '83*. He can 'organise' me any day!!** *(Geddit??)*

★ ★ ★

● DONTCHA just know it!!! There'll be Official comps for *AD&D, RuneQuest, Traveller, Golden Heroes* and a *Battlecars* shindig called *Dirt-Diggers Derby*. Right up my alley!!! *Geddit??*

★ ★ ★

● JOE Dever!?!? King of *AD&D*!?! He'll be running a *Warhammer* battlegame — *Prince Tristram Sacrificed at the Altar of Foul Lord Srularum!!* Nothing to do with Willie Whitelaw and Norman!! *(Tebbit geddit??)*

★ ★ ★

● SUNDAY will see Ian Livingstone, Steve Jackson and Don Turnbull (well just imagine!!! Geddit??) get a roasting as hobbyists get a go to ask searching questions on RPGs. Yer better swot up fellers!?!!

★ ★ ★

● *HYPERMARKET*!?! That'll be an SF skirmish run by Gary Chalk!! They don't call 'im the white dwarf for nothing!!!

★ ★ ★

● TABLETOPPING — dontcha just love it?!!? (or maybe it's not what Auntie Glenda thinks??), fanzines, computer games, fanzines, lottsa invitation games and comps, trade stands and personalities will all be there at the newly redecorated Royal Horticultural Hall, London on the weekend of November 5th and 6th. Wontcha just love it!!!!

Byeee!!!

Hovel

I hear that my friends at *Games Workshop* are finally releasing *Battlecars* this month. Three years in the making, this game of deadly driving was designed by our old chums Ian 'funboy' Livingstone and Gary 'white dwarf' Chalk. Rumours that it was playtested by Neil Kinnochio are apparently unfounded.

Depraved

A warning about the dangers and depravities of a new cult fantasy game has come from an Enfield watchdog group.

The Dungeons and Dragons game shows how to cast spells and curses, worship gods and godesses; it also speaks of urinating in churches and putting faeces on the font. Players are encouraged to 'live out' their fantasy characters during the many hours of play. One American doctor has linked 60 suicides with the new craze.

Mrs Miranda Suit, chairman of Enfield Community Standards Association, said: "It can all look innoccuous at first but, the more modules of the game you buy, the more twisted it becomes. I don't think it can be banned, but we want to point out to people the problems.

The game is reported to be selling well in some shops in Southgate.

ENFIELD INDEPENDENT

After surviving for so long with just one professional SF and fantasy gaming magazine, dear old Blighty now has three on the Street of Shame. This month sees the first issue of the newest, *Tortured Souls* from *Beast Enterprises Ltd*. The 'beasts' are survivors of the original fanzine personnel. Basil Beast tells me that the publication will be a collection of scenarios in magazine format.

For those among you who are so absorbed in role-playing games that you don't even know what day it is, help is at hand. *TSR* have released *Realms of Wonder*, a *D&D* calendar for 1984. For those of you who don't care what day it is, they have also come up with a revised edition of *Gamma World* and *Death on the Docks*, a *Gangbusters* module.

Starfleet Battles, the game for Captain Kirk look-alikes, has also been revised. The new edition is currently available along with *Starfleet Battles Commanders Rulebook*, an expansion kit with new rules and revisions. *Task Force Games* also have many additional supplements planned for the near future.

GDW have gone nap with five new *Traveller* items on the UK market this month: *Tarsus*, a boxed scenario cum play aid; *Supplement 12: Forms & Charts*; *Supplement 13: Veterans*; *Adventure 9: Nomads of the World Ocean*; and *Best of the Journal Volume III*. Also available is *The Brotherhood*, *GDW*'s game of organized crime.

CAR WARS of not-this-Steve-Jackson fame is further expanded this month with the release of *Auto-Duel Champions*, a set of rules for combining *Car Wars* with *Champions*, and a *Car Wars Referee's Screen*.

FOR those of you who wish to risk your sanity, *Chaosium* have released *The Asylum*, a *Call of Cthulhu* scenario. *Superworld*, *Chaosium*'s new boxed super-hero RPG is also now available in the UK.

UNEMPLOYED adventurers can soon find themselves some gainful employment by getting on their bike and paying a visit to the *City State of Tarantis*. This, the latest in *Judges Guild*'s *Wilderness Campaign*, includes a city map, wilderness maps and two books of descriptions.

NEXT month in *White Dwarf*, *those sunbeam dwarfsters present: Irilian*, the final instalment of the *AD&D* city; *Kwaidan*, a *Bushido* scenario, *The Demonist*, a new *AD&D* character class; Goblins in *RuneQuest*; plus *Open Box* and all the other regular features.

Pip Pip!

Nooks & Crannies

Nestling in the corner of Red Lion Square, London WC1, not a truncheon's swing from the tomb of the unknown demonstrator, sits Conway Hall. Once described by Sir Huge Cashin as a fine example of the Sorethumbian style of Victorian architecture, the hall has since fallen on hard times and has become a regular venue for religious meetings, organ recitals and other top crowd-pulling events. Now, however, its fortunes would seem to have been reversed.

THE LONDON GAMES CLUB

Clive Bailey and Joe Dever have chosen it for the location of their new *London Games Club* which will meet there on at least two Saturdays every month. The club will feature events organised by leading hobby games personalities, reduced rate trips to events, films and museums, a games 'library', a club shop and a snack bar. Initial events will cater primarily for fantasy and SF gamers but it should be emphasised that the club is open to all adventure and tabletop gamers. The first meeting was held in September, with future meetings planned for October 8th & 15th, and November 12th & 19th, from 10am to 5pm. Conway Hall is in Red Lion Square, London WC2, near Holborn tube station.

'Piloti'

WORLD OF BOOKS

Great Bestsellers of the World

WHICH best-selling author has recently switched publishers? Yes, it's Steve Jackson of not-the-*Car-Wars*-inventor fame.

Steve, flushed with crisp green bits of paper from his *Fighting Fantasy Gamebooks* for *Puffin*, has now switched to *Penguin* who will release his *Sorcery!* in November. It will be a two book set - *The Sorcery! Spell Book* and *The Shamutanti Hills*, a solo adventure for a wizard. Volume two of the adventure, *Kharé - Cityport of Traps* will be out in February/March 1984. Steve is currently working on the final two volumes of this epic four-part adventure.

'Bookworm'

CLASSIFIED

All classified ads must be prepaid at the rate of 10p per word, display ads £3.00 per scc. Please send copy and payment to White Dwarf *27-29 Sunbeam Rd, Park Royal, London NW10, making cheques/ POs payable to* Games Workshop Ltd.

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Computer Games Players?
I am looking for Games Groups or individuals who design their own adventure games or who play commercially designed games, to present this aspect of games playing to the public at *Games Day '83*, November 5th & 6th. I can provide tabling, free electricity, equipment insurance and if necessary make a contribution to your expenses. You provide the spectacle at agreed times of the day. **Interested? Then contact me, Clive Bailey, Games Workshop Ltd, 27/29 Sunbeam Road, London NW10 6JP.**

For Sale
Large collection of gaming items. Very good condition. Send SAE for details. Mr D Balaam, 16 Chantry Home Farm, Lavenham Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP2 0AY.

Wanted
AD&D players to join new, long-term non-sexist campaign. Interested? Contact, Geof or Cathy Tel: 01-346 8707. (Finchley, London).

For Sale
8 *Traveller* aids; just 50% of normal price. Selling as a set. Andrew Ketchin, 20 Glenlee Gardens, Edinburgh EH8 7HG.

Wanted
Painted/unpainted *D&D* figures, modules, rules, etc. Phone Glos (0452) 410996 after 6pm.

For Sale
White Dwarf 1-24 and *Beholder* 1-22. Contact Rich on 031-449 5634.

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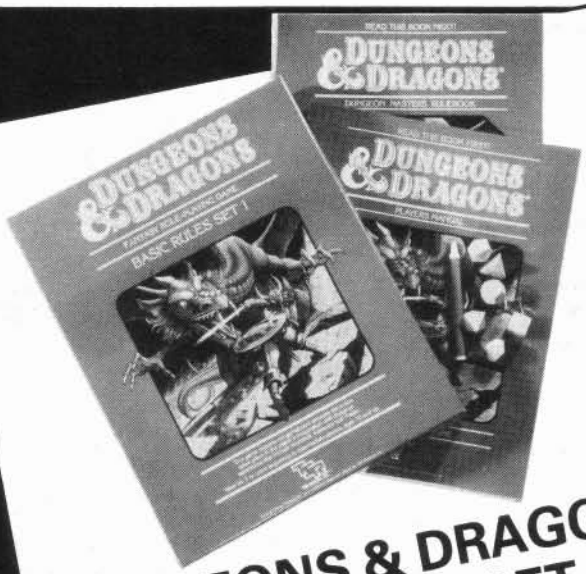

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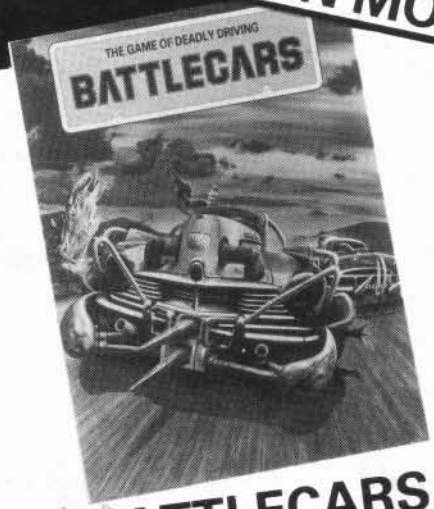

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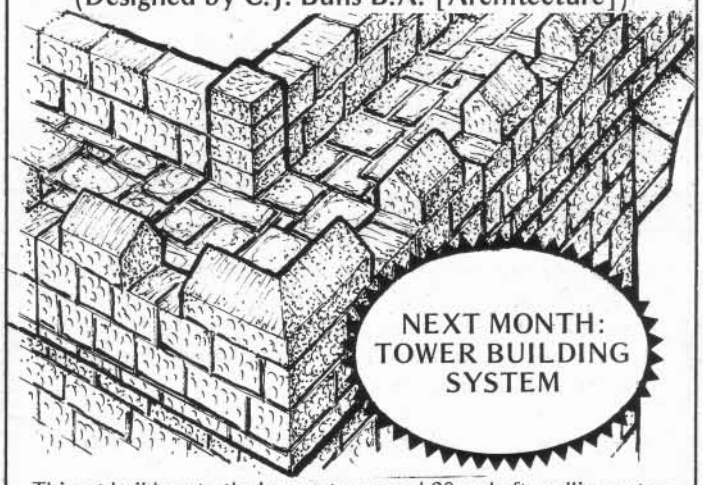

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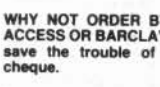

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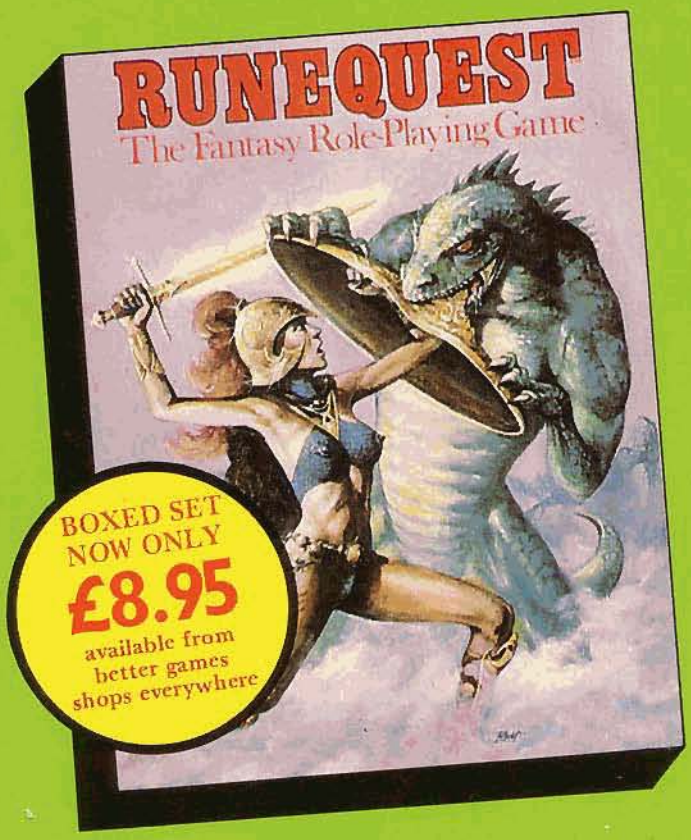

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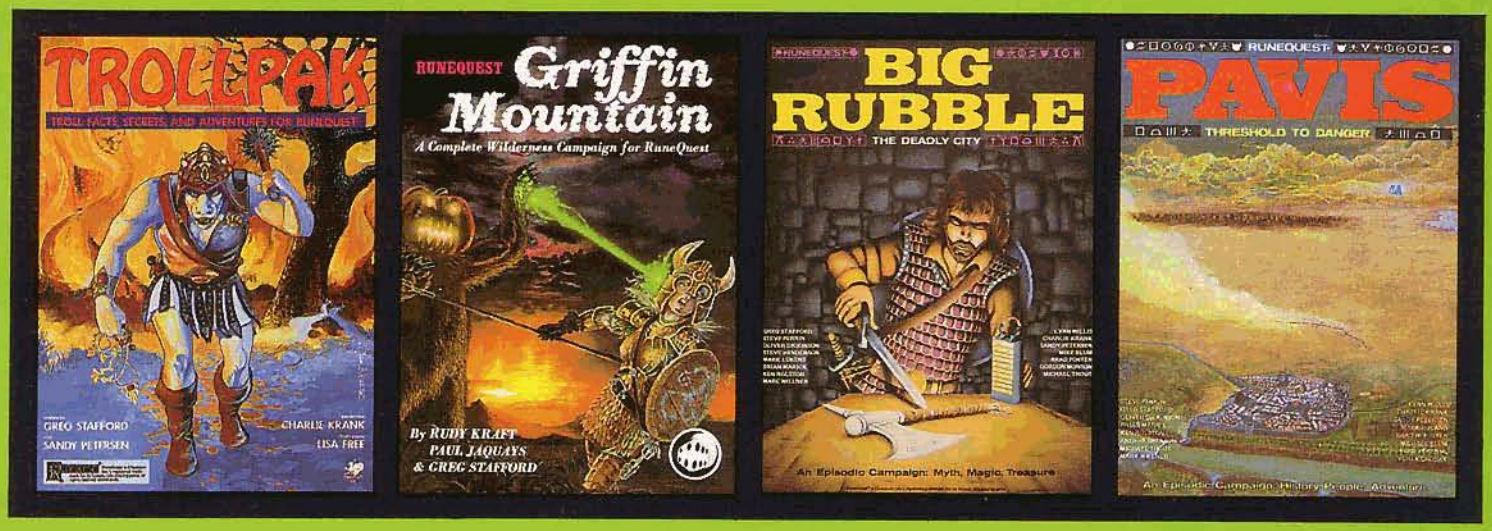

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